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**The scars of
memory.....p. 2**

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Teachers.....p.12



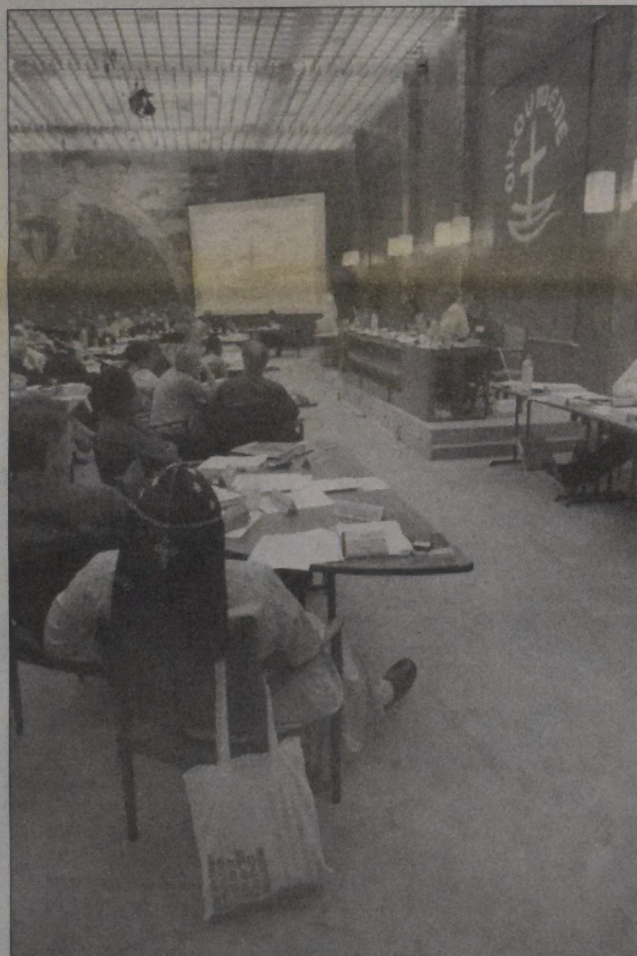
World Council of Churches to focus on US in anti-violence campaign

Harry der Nederlanden

The largest ecumenical body in the world has been undergoing a major shake-up over the past few years as it has been forced to cut back radically in staff and programs, but the Central Committee, meeting at the end of August, showed no signs of slacking off in speaking out on social and political issues. Besides making plans for the ninth general assembly in 2006, the governing body elected a new general secretary, the first from Africa, and issued some major statements on public policy issues, including Iraq.

As part of its Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) campaign, launched two years ago, it will shift focus from the Middle East (2001) and Sudan (2002) to the world's remaining superpower, the USA. The WCC and its member churches were the most adamant in opposing the US invasion of Iraq and before that the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Konrad Raiser, who will retire at the end of the year after serving for 11 years as WCC general secretary, has been calling for a radical shake-up of the way churches work together in the closing months of his tenure. He suggests that the ecumenical movement has been "overcome by institutionalization" and that a new configuration is necessary that will make the movement more flexible and responsive. The "old dream" of a global structure that embraces all churches, he says, is no longer tenable. In the future he sees the task of the WCC to be one of fostering cooperation among the churches rather than seeking to control it all. Ecumenical structures on almost every level have been experiencing serious



financial difficulties and been forced to reassess every aspect of their work.

New leader from Africa

The man chosen to lead the global organization into a new, more streamlined future is Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia of the Methodist Church in Kenya. In his acceptance speech Kobia predicted that spirituality would

become even more central in people's lives as they search for meaning and security. He affirmed Raiser's vision of an even broader ecumenism that would include Roman Catholics, Pentecostals and Evangelicals as well as the traditional mainline churches, with each of them contributing their own spirituality to enrich the movement. He said that "the WCC is first and foremost a fellowship

of churches whose primary purpose is to call one another to visible unity. We must work together and be seen to be working together."

Kobia named some distinctively African emphases that he expected to bring to his office. "One thing we say marks Africans out is the ability to celebrate life in the midst of death, and the capacity to have hope in a situation that looks hopeless."

He ended his speech with an African saying: "If you want to walk fast, walk alone. But if you want to go far, walk together with others."

Although Kobia joined Raiser in expressing relief that after 7 years of cuts the WCC has at last got its finances under control, the governing council did announce further austerity measures. Among them, the ninth general assembly to be held in Brazil in 2006 will have a budget half of the previous one. To accomplish that, the assembly, which brought together almost one thousand delegates in 1998, will be held to 700 seats and the meeting time will be shortened by two days to a total of ten days. It will still cost 6.3 million Swiss francs (about 3 million Can).

The theme for the next assembly will be: "God, in your grace, transform the world."

The reduction in the number of delegates attending will hit the big churches hardest, said Eberhardt Renz, one of the WCC presidents. Some of the churches will undoubtedly complain about being under-represented.

Financial crisis under control

Expenditures of the organization have been reduced by 20

percent over the last two years alone, and the committee members were of the opinion that it was no longer in crisis. Over the last two years income has dropped over 17 million Swiss francs and it is expected to drop further in the year ahead, but not as steeply. In 2001 the WCC supported 93 different programs; that has now been cut down to 15 core programs. So the organization has had to examine its priorities very closely.

US must withdraw from Iraq

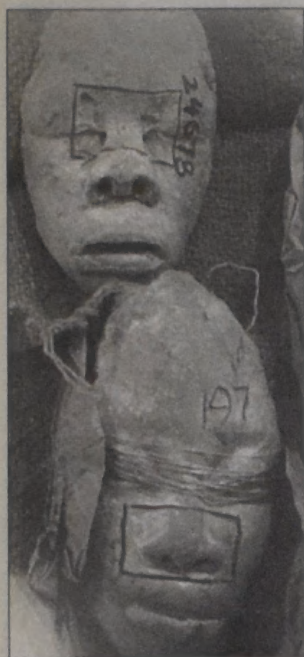
Despite its resolve not to dominate member churches, the central committee took a decided stand against US policy. Its decision to make the US the focus of this years campaign to overcome violence mentioned domestic violence within the US and the use of the death penalty, but it was obviously inspired by the past year's strident opposition to the US invasion of Iraq. "If ever there was a part of the world where work for peace is important, it is the USA," said Clifton Kirkpatrick, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

The governing body went on to make some rather detailed demands regarding US policy in Iraq. It called for an "immediate and orderly withdrawal" of occupying forces from Iraq, for the transfer of transitional administration to the UN and the replacement of coalition forces by UN personnel. Acknowledging that the Saddam regime had been abusive, it nevertheless called the coalition invasion "immoral, ill-advised and in breach of the principles of the UN charter."

In the name of the WCC, it
.....See WCC p.2

News

The scars of memory



terracotta masks, calls to mind the 1994 Rwandan genocide in which nearly a million people were killed. It tells of the victims' suffering, the silence of the international community and the deep division in Rwandan society.

Comprising installations in wood, metal and clay, its centrepiece is a bed of earth some three metres square in which are set clay masks, recalling a mass grave. A metal vulture hovers overhead.

Other parts of the display show masks with numbers cut into their foreheads and wires bound across their eyes. These are statistics, rendered impersonal and powerless by the perpetrators of genocide.

Some of the work is bitterly satirical. Wooden abstracts of three busts with a human skull in front of them marked "Exhibit" are captioned, "Judges: what part did you play?" Sentries stand guard over a defenceless population, but they stand in coffins rather than sentry-boxes. "Political, religious, military leaders – masquerades" depicts figures whose breasts are boxes with hinged doors, open to see that inside they are heartless and hollow.

To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the massacres in Rwanda, the WCC Ecumenical Centre in Geneva hosted the sculpture installation of the famous Ghanaian artist and sculptor Kofi Setordji. It is called "The Scars of Memory."

The main work, an installation of wooden sculptures and

One of the most powerful works is an untitled wooden figure, one massively powerful arm hanging down with its fist clenched, ready to strike. The pointing left hand holds scales of justice, empty but weighted down on one side. It is topped by a metal face with pitiless eyes but no mouth; there is nothing to say to the victims.

Speaking at the opening of the exhibition held during the meetings of the WCC central committee, Dr Wilfried Steen of the Evangelical Church in Germany, which sponsored the event, said: "The unimaginable cruelty of the events in Rwanda during the massacres of the civil war needs artistic creativity and integrity to allow some form of coming to terms with the recent past. No healing of memories will be possible without this challenge of comprehension."

In his own speech, Setordji said, "Nine years ago I was traumatized by the images on TV of genocide in Rwanda, and that brought into being the creation of this exhibition."

"I have dedicated this work to all genocide victims in the world."

Addressing Central Committee members, "I trust when you go back to your country you will encourage others never to be part of the crowd of passive onlookers, but to take a stand in the name of peace and human dignity," he said.

Blair might appropriately be charged with war crimes for their "illegal resort to war" on Iraq. Peter Weiderud, director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, conceded that such action was unlikely in view of the fact that this would mean the UN taking action against two of its permanent members.

So it was a purely symbolic gesture, a gesture that is hardly calculated to inspire evangelical and Baptist churches in the US to consider an invitation to join the WCC's ecumenical projects. Nor does it signal a willingness to relinquish its well-established practice of making wide-ranging political statements on behalf of its member churches.

See p. 3 for related story



Later, Setordji spoke of seeing images of refugees in Goma and corpses floating in Lake Ituri: "Seeing all those dead bodies, like discarded wrapping paper, I had to ask, 'How can this happen in the 20th century?' These people died for nothing."

"And I questioned the whole system which let people kill, and then punished them, but didn't judge those who fueled the killing – the arms dealers, and the major powers playing off one power against another."

Setordji believes that the actions of the Hutu killers were possible because they lost their sense of individual responsibility in the actions of a group. Describing this as a "sickness", he said that "The main goal of the exhibition is to let people come face to face with themselves, and

say, 'We too have this disease.' We want to eradicate polio, but we don't want to look at ourselves."

"This happened because people use human beings as chess pieces. It was in no one's interest to stop it," he continued.

"But I want this exhibition to be a 'stop' sign. It will set people thinking: this is not about two ethnic groups, or about the African continent – it is about humans."

Speaking of the part played in his work by prayer, Setordji said: "God created the world. The key is that God created in his own image. He took clay and water, and breathed the breath of life into it. In our work, we too add creativity, and so we are in the image of God."

...see memories p.3

WCC

...continued from p. 1



New General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia with Konrad Raiser

called for the UN Security Council "to insist on the establishment of a legitimate, sovereign, elected and inclusive government as early as possible, and (to order) the immediate and orderly withdrawal of the occupying forces."

If this weren't strong enough, the committee went on to imply that US President George Bush and British Prime Minister Tony



"Onlookers" by Sculptor Kofi Setordji

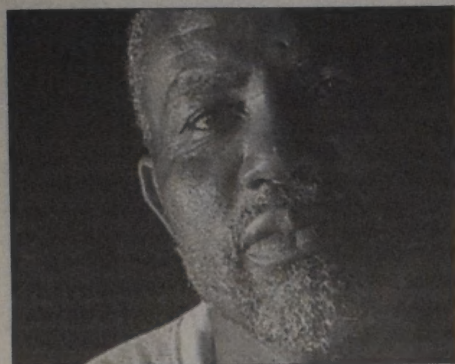
Politics

Memories

...continued from p.2

The exhibition at the Ecumenical Centre comprises only a third of Setordji's work on

the Rwandan theme, created over a period of two and a half years of intense labor.



To view more of the sculpture installation online:
www.vmmaa.nl/genocide/

Ghanaian artist and sculptor Kofi Setordji.

The WCC speaks out on Africa and Europe

Besides addressing the issue of the US and Iraq, the central committee of the WCC also spoke out on several other international political issues, focusing particularly on Africa and the European Union.

Condemning the violence of both Liberia's (ex)president Charles Taylor's forces and of the rebel forces, the WCC called on churches and church-related agencies to provide humanitarian assistance and support to the Liberian churches to enable them to contribute to the peace and restoration of normal life in that country, making a special appeal to the US churches because of their historic ties to that country. Over the last few months, the central committee and some of the US member churches have repeatedly called on the US government to send troops to Liberia to prevent further massacres there.

It expressed its appreciation for the work of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its military arm for intervening in Liberia and promoting the peace agreement and transition.

The WCC issued its strongest statement to date on the crisis in Zimbabwe, urging its member churches to condemn acts of violence in Zimbabwe, referring primarily to lawless actions and suppression by President Mugabe

and his supporters. Mugabe's land resettlement program (if the seizures can be called that) have led to economic chaos and disrespect for law in that country. The WCC has lent encouragement and support to the churches in Zimbabwe as they resisted the bullying of Mugabe and sought to defend justice and order in their land. It called for continued support of Zimbabwe's churches as they work "to restore the rule of law and put an end to arbitrary arrest, torture and killings."

"The government's handling of the situation through recourse to violence and introduction of contentious legislative measures has compounded the crisis, isolating the country and bringing it to the brink of ruin," it said. Millions of Zimbabweans, it pointed out, now rely on food aid for survival in a country that used to export food.

The WCC also picked up on an issue that the Vatican has been pressing hard over the last few months – the glaring omission of any reference to the historic role of Christianity and the church in the constitution being drawn up by the European Union. Pope John Paul II has in the past year spoken of it as "cultural vandalism." The central committee called for an acknowledgement in the EU constitution of the "central role of Christianity

and the contributions of other religions in European history and civilization."

Not everyone agreed that there should be an explicit reference to Europe's Christian heritage in the EU constitution (especially in view of the fact that countries like Turkey are expecting to join the union). The final statement went on to warn against the emergence of new divisions in Europe based on fault lines between eastern and western Christian cultures, and between Christianity and Islam.



Principalities & Powers

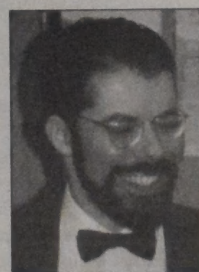
David T. Koyzis

"I'm personally opposed, but..."

In 1984 the then-governor of New York, Mario Cuomo, made a famous speech at the University of Notre Dame, one of the best known Catholic universities in the United States. As a Catholic Christian himself, Gov. Cuomo used the occasion to clarify the way his faith affected his conduct in public office, particularly with respect to the abortion issue. Recognizing that his church condemns abortion in no uncertain terms, he affirmed his church's teaching, indicating that he and his wife would never themselves have considered ending a pregnancy prematurely. Yet as a public office-holder, he believed it improper to impose his personal moral beliefs on others. In this way he justified his own pro-choice position on the issue.

Since then many other Christians in public office have taken the same approach, which amounts to saying, "I'm personally opposed, but..." This strategy is almost always applauded by the secular media, whose representatives are formed from their earliest days by the assumption that religion is a purely private matter, never to intrude upon ordinary political discourse. When someone enters the political arena claiming to favor a particular position, and if it is known that her religion plays a role in this, the secularist mindset invariably cries foul.

In a recent National Post opinion piece, Claire Hoy pointed out the incongruity of this response. After all, every political agenda entails the imposition of a particular policy on one's fellow citizens who may disagree with it. Thus when Brian Mulroney's Conservatives won the 1988 election, they quite naturally used the opportunity to impose free trade with the United States on this country,



despite the fact that it was disliked by anti-free-traders. Yet even among the latter, few claimed that Mulroney was doing something intrinsically wrong or undemocratic.

David T. Koyzis is Professor of Political Science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and is the author of *Political Visions and Illusions* (InterVarsity Press). Although he was at Notre Dame in 1984, he missed Gov. Cuomo's now famous speech.

Proposing vs imposing

However, it is only when a political leader's motives are known to be overtly religious in origin that this "imposition" is suddenly deemed illegitimate. Yet Mary Ann Glendon argues that when people advance their moral viewpoints in the political arena, they are proposing, not imposing. This is simply what democracy is about: citizens propose their preferred policy alternatives and defend them in public debate, after which they are voted on and implemented. "It's a very strange doctrine," writes Glendon, "that would silence only religiously grounded moral viewpoints." By contrast, justice requires that, if secularists of the various ideological persuasions are permitted to advance their own agendas, so also should be the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Christian Coalition, and similar groups.

In a way one can understand secularists attempting to exclude from political deliberation those viewpoints that would explicitly undermine their own hegemony. For the past three centuries the followers of the secular ideologies have looked upon traditional religions as deeply divisive, seeing themselves as better positioned to keep domestic peace than their Jewish, Christian and Muslim fellow citizens. Thus they have no difficulty privileging their own point of view above that of these others.

However, it is harder to see why so many Christians have acquiesced in their own marginalization in the public square. Why would Gov. Cuomo so easily accept the secularists' terms by sidelining his own moral convictions concerning the protection of the unborn? The cynical answer is that the abortion issue was simply not all that close to his heart, and there may well be something to that. But, more to the point, he and many other Christians are part of a culture where the marginalization of one's ultimate beliefs is understood to be the normal state of affairs. The time has come to break through this apparent normality and to open up the public square.

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Editorials

Iraq once more

Harry der Nederlanden

After a fierce debate about Iraq some months ago, the pages of CC have been relatively quiet on the subject. Of course, radio, television and daily newspapers have served up more on Iraq than most of us can stomach – a diet to set one's teeth on edge.

I've thought it the better part of wisdom to exercise patience and to wait and see, hoping that events would unfold better than I (and many others) feared. In many ways, they have. No one, not even the optimists around Bush, thought that Iraq's infrastructure would be repaired and a democratic government up and running in a matter of a few months.

A surprising segment of news reporters from Iraq, however, seemed to think it ought to be. Almost from day one after the collapse of the Iraqi army, they have reported lack of water and electricity, disorder, hostility toward the US, shootings, etc. as signs that the whole project is doomed to failure. In many ways, most Iraqis and most Americans have been more realistic in this respect than much of the media.

As Fareed Zakaria writes in a recent *Newsweek*, right now in Iraq you can find stories to support almost any theory about how the larger picture is unfolding.

Following the story

Led by the media, we have already passed through several phases or stages of reaction to the Iraq invasion/liberation.

As the invasion was launched, remember, we kept being told that any moment now the British and American forces would feel the full force of Saddam's wrath. Every time the Allied advance stalled, the press began talking of a quagmire. At the same time, images of all the

innocent casualties caused by American bombs and missiles came to us via international television as Al Jazeera showed the war from the other side.

When the Americans rolled over the Iraqi army much more quickly than anticipated with amazingly few civilian casualties, conservative commentators in the US had a field day. The opposition had predicted a protracted war, the horror of chemical and biological weapons, uprisings in other Muslim countries, skies darkened by oilfield fires, civil war, thousands of civilian casualties, starvation and sickness. None of the dire prophecies were borne out, and briefly the liberal press lapsed into a grudging acquiescence.

That lasted only a short while, however, before the Bush administration was getting WAWMD. "Where Are the Weapons of Mass Destruction?" demanded the media. The invasion of Iraq had been urgent, said Bush, because those WMD were primed to kill thousands of innocent Westerners. So it was a good question. It has yet to be satisfactorily answered.

(It is a genuine puzzle. If they had been destroyed, why didn't Saddam show that he'd done so and why didn't he cooperate with the UN inspectors? Both, you'd think, are infinitely preferable to war.)

Since the WMD haven't turned up, and since the Iraqi war machine offered far less resistance than was expected, other questions followed. "Why was American intelligence so far off-base?" Did the various agencies fail to cooperate properly? Did they tell the White House what they thought the government wanted to hear? Or did the Bush team interpret good information according to preconceived ideas about what was happening in Iraq?

Then there was that one sentence in one of Bush's speeches about Iraq shopping for nuclear materials in Niger. It was bad intelligence. The heat on the president became so fierce that several other people stepped forward to take the blame for the error.

With the American veneration for Bush's leadership beginning to wear off a bit, the liberal press grew bolder. It sharpened the question. Did the Bush administration lie to the American public and the world? Did they trump up a case for invading Iraq?

The burgeoning bill for Iraq's reconstruction and occupation is straining what a short time ago looked like a bottomless US purse. At the same time the well-planned bombings of four different targets in Baghdad indicate that the monster is far from dead; some, indeed, suggest that it is mutating into something more dangerous as Ba'athists (secular) and radical Islamists join forces. As time wears on and the difficulties and costs of reconstruction become more apparent, I fear that the media are (not necessarily deliberately) fostering sentiment among the American public to cut their losses and get out as quickly as possible. That would be disastrous, not first of all for Bush and company, but for the Iraqi people.

Head-shaking

Although I was skeptical about the various reasons Bush gave why an invasion of Iraq was urgent and thought he should have relied on containment, I have been praying that things go well in the reconstruction of Iraq.

Those who were vehemently opposed to the war, of course, cannot now refrain from doing some gloating. At the same time, they are now eager to lay all blame for every mistake and everything that goes wrong on Bush's shoulders. That strikes me not only as unseemly and false but also damaging to the prospect of making some good

come out of this violent process.

Having said that, I still cannot help but shake my head at how badly the Bush administration in general underestimated the difficulties of reconstructing the country of Iraq and providing an environment for the development of self-government. As I'm writing this, most of the head-shaking is about the billions upon billions that occupying and rebuilding is now estimated to cost – a whopping \$165 billion. [I'm tempted to ask what is perhaps an unfair question: how far would that much money have gone to eradicate AIDS in Africa?]

There does come a time of assessment and accounting. But it must strive to be fair, not ideological. That will be difficult in view of the fact that there's an election in the making.

Perhaps...

From the beginning, even among those sympathetic with the US insistence that it was time to get tough with Saddam, many expressed fears that the Bush administration put entirely too much confidence in the capacity of yankee know-how to "fix" things, as if a culture and a society were just a complex piece of technology. It would, indeed, have been better if Bush had been a little more "shocked" at his own temerity at such a bold undertaking and a little more "awed" by the mystery of another culture.

Perhaps he went a little too much on the assumption that Iraqis are like us – that they eagerly embrace our kinds of political freedoms, our kind of economy, our visions for the future. Perhaps Bush and company thought the people of Iraq, overjoyed at their liberation from Saddam's cruel yoke, would pitch in and work together like the people of New York after 9-11. On the other hand, assuming that Iraqis prize freedom as much as we do is better than suggesting they are such a different species of humanity that they have no appreciation for freedom.

Perhaps, too, the Bush team relied overly much on the prospect that much of the reconstruction could be paid for by revenues from Iraqi oil. Perhaps they thought that after the war the yearning for peace and stability among former followers of Saddam would overcome hostility and resistance. Perhaps they didn't sufficiently anticipate the inflow of radical Muslims from other Arab countries eager to shed the blood of the infidel desecrating sacred soil.

Perhaps... perhaps.... Perhaps we should spend less time looking back and more looking forward.

Whatever the mistakes that were made, the fact is that the Iraqi people need help to create a new future for themselves and their children, and we need to focus on the present to make that happen. Rather than sit back to enjoy the spectacle of Bush and the US being humiliated, it is time for the Canadian government to take the lead in spurring other countries and the UN to pitch in and to make life better for the Iraqi people.

There are powerful spiritual forces at work throughout the Muslim world that would instill hatred not just against America, but against everything Western, including democracy and the Christian elements still part of Western civilization. If the Americans and British fail in establishing in Iraq a way of life in which moderate Muslims can thrive without repressing others, that failure will in the long run hurt all of us – badly.

Like it or not, we are in the same boat with the Americans, and we do well to pick up a paddle.

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Letters

Although marriage is unique, some other partnerships also need legal recognition

The following is an excerpt from a letter addressed by Janet Somerville, recently retired as general secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches, to Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs

This question [of the redefinition of marriage] is not merely an abstract one for me. I live with a friend of the same gender. That friend, for admirably generous reasons, adopted an infant who is now a seven-year-old boy. We share a household (a co-op apartment) with its work and expenses. Although only my friend is the boy's legal parent, I also, as his "honorary grandmother", share in caring for him. My income supported the household until I retired as I neared the magic age of 65. Since my retirement, all three of us need Canada's precious heritage of social programs so that there can be enough income and services (like medicare, God bless it!) for my friend to continue to meet her son's needs. For all these reasons, I am personally aware of the importance of legal and social support for real but non-traditional expressions of parent-like responsibilities.

But my friend and I have no need to consider ourselves married.

Marriage is a very specific term with a very, very long and global history. Every human society has taken marriage very seriously, and has regulated it with deep and (usually) religious concern. Why? Because marriage is the unique state of intimacy between a man and a woman which makes it likely that the man and woman will "graduate" from intimacy into shared, willing parenthood. It is precisely that likelihood that makes marriage uniquely important. It is not merely the mutual support or even the mutual fidelity of the partners to each other that makes marriage so important to society as a whole. It is, precisely, the likelihood of parenthood, shared both biologically and culturally. After all, stability, responsibility, and delight in the long difficult labor of parenting is at the living core of every society's ability to survive humanely. Children who have received love and nurture and identity and a nuanced cultural heritage are the unique, irreplaceable hope for the human future.

I know – because I live in such a situation – that there are times when it is best for everyone that a particular child be raised, not by his or her birth parents but by some other combination of loving adults. And I know – because we too need such help – that it is crucial for organized society, by means of law, social programs, and respectful protection to stand by the adults who are actually raising a child, whether or not they are the child's biological parents. I am certainly not against the legal adoption (with all the checks and safeguards that attend any adoption) of a child by persons who are fit for such a responsibility, whether or not they are a married and heterosexual couple. I also recognize that committed domestic life-partners, whether homosexual, heterosexual or celibate, need to be protected (and challenged) by laws and customs that are ac-



Marc Chagall's 'The Wedding'.

cepted by everyone.

But all of that does NOT mean that Canada should suddenly move to change the ancient, global meaning of marriage by declaring gender irrelevant to marriage.

The usual, spontaneous, unassisted fertility of a woman and man who are in the state of socially approved intimacy that has always been called "marriage" is no mere irrelevancy. It is a tremendously important "natural resource," as important as the fertility of the soil and of the seas and rivers. Human fertility is a wild and wonderful cosmic power, as "green" and as central to the human future as the oxygen breathed out by trees, or as earth-filtered clean water. Marriage unites precisely that wild and natural biological marvel with committed interpersonal love and with public, life-long social responsibility. By common and ancient consent, marriage retains its deep cultural and spiritual significance also in those cases where there turns out not to be the biological fertility which is the ordinary expectation for a woman-man union.

Surely such an integrating and consequential institution deserves to keep for itself its unique name! Doesn't it seem like hubris on the part of our generation to declare such a natural /social, anciently-recognized, man/woman uniqueness to be "unconstitutional"?

Other partnerships – same-sex ones, for example – might be mutually joyful, might be socially positive, might sometimes effectively carry the onerous responsibilities of parenthood. As such, they deserve legal support and protection (as "civil unions", for example). But that doesn't make them the same thing as traditional, heterosexual marriage. And they don't need the same ancient name that marriage bears.

It seems to me that this issue is about the importance of a critical mass of common, ancient, intergenerational meaning – meaning that is grounded and rooted in long human experience – even for a society in flux, as ours is.

Multiculturalism and secularism have been in many ways enriching and liberating for the human society that is Canada. We need those two developments. But human societies need something besides diversity, something more alive than neutrality. They need some evocative, influential pools of shared meaning. Especially when life is difficult, people need to be sustained by shared meaning.

If, for example, there were no inherited agreement that public service – in the army, in the police force and fire service, and in doctoring and nursing – sometimes has the

right to ask the public servant to risk her or his very life and health, we would not have seen the selfless behavior of doctors and nurses and paramedics here during the SARS crisis. We would not even have seen the uncomplaining exhaustion of firefighters during the very recent hydro blackout in Ontario, let alone the heroic saga of fire-fighters in New York on that infamous September 11. Deeply shared meaning can evoke heroism from quite ordinary humans. But meaning like that takes generations and generations to gain its true gravitas. We receive its depths and steadiness as a gift from many ancestors, not as a piece of social engineering done in less than one lifetime's span.

Marriage is even more important than the fire department. Parenting can be as tough as any peacekeeping assignment. Let us treat the inherited, shared meaning of marriage with profound (if not uncritical) public respect. Let us not risk weakening its life-shaping meaning by officially depriving it of one of its unique dimensions: the gendered dimension of the man-woman union with its substratum of likely biological parenthood.

I could say much more, but this is already long for a letter to one's MP – especially an MP who is also a hyper-busy Cabinet minister. Though I am a religious believer, I have not spoken of the religious "stake" in traditional marriage, or of the ways I believe it to be ordained by the Creator of all. I am aware that in the public mood of the present moment, theological language can alienate many who participate in this debate about the public meaning of the word "marriage".

Thank you for your time in reading what I, and countless other people, so deeply believe to be a matter of the common good.

Yours sincerely,
Janet Somerville

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Letters/Opinion

Canadian anti-Americanism revisited: it has come in many shapes and sizes

Bert den Boggende

While Harry Antonides started his recent two-part article, "The root cause of anti-Americanism" (June 23 and July 28), with a quote from Frank Underhill that the Canadian is "the first anti-American, the model anti-American, the archetypal anti-American," he didn't provide any evidence. Instead, he quoted several recent expressions of anti-Americanism by Canadians in connection with the American invasion of Iraq and then concluded, without proof, that lately "the hatred for America has become more hard-edged." He ended the article by reviewing two recent American publications about European anti-Americanism, superficially giving the impression of having done some scholarly research.

Antonides, however, fails to provide the proper Canadian context.

From his own experiences he should have recalled Diefenbaker's railing against the Americans, notably around the 1963 election. He should also have re-

called what was said (screamed?) during the Vietnam war or much more recently during the free trade debate.

There is no dearth of books and articles dealing with Canadian anti-Americanism at specific times. The best overview, I think, is probably still Jack Granatstein's *Yankee Go Home? Canadians and Anti-Americanism*, published in 1996. If Antonides had read this book he would not have erred by saying that the hatred for America has recently become more hard-edged.

Canada's history of anti-Americanism

Let's take a closer look at Canada's earlier history and discover something of the complexity of Canadian anti-Americanism. As Granatstein lamented in his book *Who Killed Canadian History?*, not only Americans but also all too often Canadians are quite ignorant of their history.

Anti-Americanism came into the country with the Loyalists.

Driven and fleeing from the rebellious colonies, they lost their homes and businesses. Their anti-Americanism was tinged with ambiguity, for while loyal to king George III they were also influenced by their American environment. This first appearance of anti-Americanism is, thus, more than two centuries old! It was a conservative anti-Americanism that would permeate much of Canadian history.

Nearly two centuries later other Americans fled the US, draft dodgers, unwilling to go to Vietnam. Theirs was a different type of anti-Americanism, often more radical, left-leaning and focused on a specific war policy. Some of the well-educated draft dodgers got university positions at the rapidly expanding and new Canadian universities.

In his book *Anti-Americanism: Critiques at Home and Abroad, 1965-1990* (1992), the American Paul Hollander noted that 31 per cent of Canadian academics replying to his survey were American-born and many of them draft dod-

gers. He thought that could help explain the critical attitude towards the US. It doesn't seem too far-fetched to imagine that the draft dodger profs, although a minority among the elite influx, had some influence on the present generation and the current outburst against the war activities of the Bush administration.

Canada's birth in anti-Americanism

If the anti-Americanism of the Loyalists was due to being driven from their homes, another form came because of invasions during the war of 1812 (which again victimized many Loyalists). Homes were again destroyed, and the city of York (Toronto) burned. A key factor in this anti-Americanism was fear, a fear that was intensified in 1837 with the rebellions in Lower and Upper Canada. At this time, William Lyon Mackenzie and the reformers stood for republicanism, an idea greatly feared by conservatives. Anti-Americanism became equated with loyalty; pro-Americanism (not to mention annexation) with disloyalty. Anglican bishop Strachan and the so-called Family Compact were not the only conservatives objecting to the rebellion. Strachan's Methodist opponent Egerton Ryerson, the founding father of the public school system, also feared American influence.

The birth of Canada took place in an anti-American context. British-born John A. Macdonald wanted to die a British subject. Anti-Americanism was thus the flip-side of being pro-British. But there was more. For Macdonald and his cohort, the recent civil war in the United States showed that U.S. federalism was a failure. Besides the political and military fear of the U.S., there was also economic fear, which produced Macdonald's National Policy, a policy that was gospel to the Conservatives (under whatever name) and much of the business community until recent times. It was not until Brian Mulroney's free trade agreement that conservatives and the business community completed their conversion from anti-Americanism.

In other words, for about two centuries some form of anti-Americanism was part and parcel of Canadian conservatism. That does not mean that there was no anti-Americanism among liberals, but for more than a century liber-

als had feared the influence of the United States much less than conservatives. In fact, they promoted closer economic ties with the United States, and in doing so they were badly beaten at the polls in the elections against Macdonald. It was not until Wilfrid Laurier reversed the liberal position that the Liberals were elected in 1896. Still, when Laurier tried closer economic ties in 1911, he was badly beaten at the polls and betrayed by many of his Liberal colleagues.

Other ingredients

A still different type of anti-Americanism concerns American involvement and non-involvement in war. In his 1967 autobiography *My First Seventy-five Years*, Arthur Lower, a well-known nationalist Canadian historian, wrote about his youth "Spanish-American War – traditional anti-Americanism! Boer War – Britishism! Alaska Boundary award – anti-Americanism combined with something like anti-Britishism!" Military historian Charles Stacey in his autobiography *A Date with History: Memoirs of a Canadian Historian* (1983) noted that "a good many Canadians of my generation regarded the United States with a somewhat dubious eye. We had been nurtured on memories of the War of 1812 and the Fenian Raids, and American neutrality in 1914-17 had left a mark that had not been wholly expunged by American intervention in 1917-18, the more so as it was popularly believed in Canada that Americans considered, and frequently said, that they had won the war, in spite of the fact that they had done comparatively little of the actual fighting."

There was still another ingredient to Canadian anti-Americanism. In its early history Canada generally accepted European influences. Culturally there was little evidence of nationalism. That changed significantly with the Group of Seven. Such nationalism would later influence historians as well as, among others, the founding of the CBC, the Massey Report, the flag debate, and the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. There have been frequent moves to protect Canadian culture against the massive influx of American materials.

Other incidents could be added, but it should have become apparent that anti-Americanism has

Many bad arguments

Dear Editor,

I personally believe that the bible clearly disapproves of homosexual relationships. I just don't see how that gives me the right to tell non-believing Canadians how to live their lives.

I don't think I've read or heard as many bad arguments about any subject as I have recently about the proposed changes to the legal definition of marriage in Canada. The most insidious argument is based on the myth that Canada (or the U.S.) was founded upon Christian principles, which any reasonably competent historian can tell you simply isn't true.

It's curious that some of us make that argument now, because we don't want to be perceived as trying to "impose" our religion upon all Canadian citizens. We appeal to civil tradition instead. "Marriage has always been defined as...." Have we forgotten that up until 1910, women and colored people had "always" been defined as non-persons? Tradition is a weak argument.

The truth is, this change of legislation is entirely within the character of the type of society envisioned by our founding fathers (and mothers), and by the founders of the U.S. constitution, including Jefferson and Franklin. They

wished to protect the citizens of our nations from persecution or discrimination based on religion, and also to protect religion from the inevitable corruption politics would bring to it.

It is entirely in keeping with this vision that individuals are free to pursue happiness in any way that does not infringe upon the rights of other citizens to pursue their happiness. I know some of us like to take a nanny approach and insist that only we know what true "happiness" is for all Canadians, but most Canadians will not believe us. And it requires remarkable rhetorical acrobatics to argue that Christians are unjustly penalized when the government permits same-sex couples to have access to the same legal rights as any other partnership based on a sexual relationship. The government has already indicated that no church will be forced to conduct a same-sex marriage ceremony.

Many people believe the legal redefinition of marriage puts us on a "slippery slope," without realizing that there are good reasons why "slippery slope" arguments are regarded as weak by experts on the law. You are not arguing against the issue itself, but against some hypothetical projected outcome. Using a "slippery slope,"

any proposal, no matter how reasonable, can be made to seem frightening.

We went through the same – well, it does sound like "hysteria" – when the government liberalized divorce laws, gave equal rights to women, and took itself out of the bedrooms of the nation. I think the church should say, "as a collective worshipping community, we don't agree with this change in law, and we ask that the government respect our rights to worship according to our beliefs." The government has already said "thank you, and we will."

I'm not impressed by the righteous indignation, the sweeping condemnations, and the tiresome insistence that our nation is falling into a moral abyss because our politicians don't listen to our preachers. Last time I checked – say, when 450,000 people gathered peacefully in Toronto for a rock concert – most people seem to be getting along pretty well without our moral guidance.

And, Bert [Witvoet], your comment about Christians possibly being "persecuted" over this issue is a classic "slippery slope" argument.

Bill Van Dyk,
Kitchener Ont.

Letters/Media

Moving West under the big sky

...continued from p. 6

been a long-standing feature of Canadian history. It has various layers and various reasons, totally unrelated to European anti-Americanism.

There has been much ambiguity in that stance. While there were many who wanted to keep the British connection – and before World War II most of the trade was still with Britain and the Commonwealth – there were also many who promoted trade with the United States. After World War I the trend in trade started to move in the direction of the United States, a move largely completed after World War II.

Different kinds of anti-Americanism

Fear and need are the poles of our ambiguous attitude to the United States. Between those poles there are numerous variations, something Antonides failed to discuss. In fact, not everyone agrees on the meaning of anti-Americanism and that contributes to the complexity and confusion of the issue.

Granatstein's definition, which I have largely followed here, is as good as any. He defined anti-Americanism as "a distaste for and fear of American military, political, cultural, and economic activities that, while widespread in the population, is usually benign unless and until it is exploited by business, political, or cultural groups for their own ends."

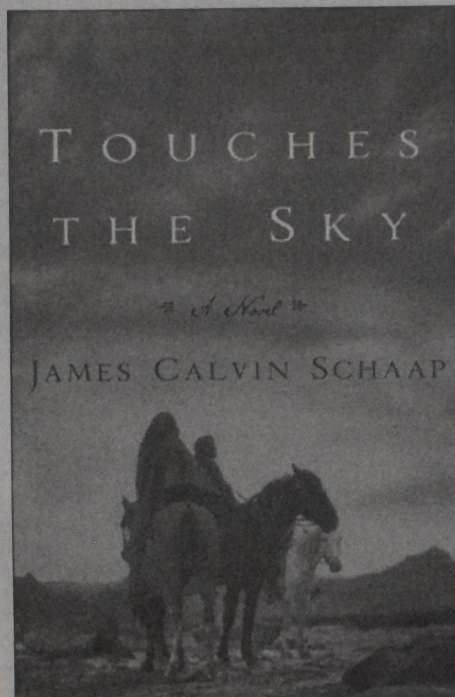
Granatstein himself exemplifies the ambiguity. He started his research as a devout anti-American, thinking that "the United States was and remained a threat to Canada's independence, and [that] anti-Americanism was a rational defence against the takeover of Canada by American money, ideas, and culture." As the question mark in the title of the book indicates, he changed his mind during the research. He came to see that "anti-Americanism was almost always employed as a tool by Canadian political and economic elites bent on preserving or enhancing their power. It was largely the Tory way of keeping pro-British attitudes uppermost in the Canadian psyche."

He concludes that after World War II, "anti-Americanism gradually became an ever more feeble and defensive response to the increasing American economic, military, and political suzerainty over Canada and the world." According to Granatstein, most segments that used anti-Americanism for their own ends (the right, the protectionist center, Red Tories, the Liberal, Marxist and social democratic left) have now succumbed to continentalism. Those who still use it are literati, some on the political left, cultural groups, a few academics, and *Toronto Star* editorialists.

That list does not differ all that much from Antonides' list. But the conclusion is dramatically different, keeping in mind that Granatstein wrote in 1996: "Anti-Americanism had been marginalized, by-passed, and overtaken by events." As the events surrounding Iraq indicate, that is not completely correct.

On the other hand, if Antonides had taken the long view, he would have realized that the recent anti-Americanism is a minor flare-up of a significantly smaller group than those of the past.

One final point. Very often anti-Americanism has been a form of blaming the enemy. With the threat of American invasions, annexation, bullying, and expressions of Manifest Destiny, there seems to be some justification for that. More worrisome is that anti-Americanism can be an evasion of responsibility and obligation. Did Canadians have a moral obligation to support the American invasion in Iraq, as Antonides suggests the American government expected – and probably he himself as well? The majority of Canadians sided with the Canadian government. Antonides apparently did not agree with the majority.



"In the winter of 1881 I told myself there was nothing for me in Hull, Iowa, or all of Sioux County, where people either lived by the upright moral codes of the community or spent their strength fighting them. Those were my choices. And that's why, for me, going to the Dakota Territory in April, 1882, seemed the right thing to do."

From *Touches the Sky* by James Schaap

With that, the author of *Touches the Sky* brings his readers to a seat at the knee of the novel's storyteller, Jan Ellerbeck, as he recalls "everything I remember, as it stays with me and God gives me the patience to tell it."

Set in the Dakota Territory as Dutch immigrants move into Indian Territory, readers are drawn into the lives of both cultures as their pathways intersect and clashes boil over into the violence of the historic massacre at Wounded Knee.

"James Schaap captures that frightened and doubtful little child inside each of us and clothes him in buckskins," says Pine Ridge Indian Reservation physician, Dr. David Mulder, in reviewing the novel. "It is not enough that the main character, Jan Ellerbeck, must deal with the death of his wife and children, and the demands of Dutch immigrant society. Also throw in racial prejudice, Old West reservation politics, predestination, starvation, cracked melting pots, murder on the prairie, interracial love affairs, the Seventh Cavalry, the Ghost Dance cult and the mystery of faith. And that's just the start of this Great Plains cyclone of a story. Good luck putting this one down."

The author of more than 20 books, James Schaap's latest effort is an absorbing and profound story that probes far beyond the history of the making of the West, into the depths of humanity and a God whom the main character admits "can seem as vast and unknown as the prairie."

The cross-over appeal of *Touches the Sky* speaks to a broad audience. "I'm not sure whether, in the end, I've read a mystery, a morality play, or a western — but it is a great, passionate yarn," says the editor in chief of *The Banner*, Dr. John Suk, a magazine where the novel was serialized and printed over the course of the past year.

After the loss of his family and his faith in the winter of 1881, the main character, Jan Ellerbeck, set off across the prairie where he met Dalitha Ward, a missionary teacher on the Rosebud Indian Reservation. The unlikely compan-

ions "surprised each other and ourselves by falling in love." Dalitha's relationship with the Sioux Indians is one of care and grave concern as the Lakota's embrace a cult-like "ghost dance" ritual that they hoped would snatch the white man from the face of the earth and bring back the sacred buffalo.

Strained race relations intensify when a Dutch hired hand is found dead. The settlers accuse the Lakota, who insist on their innocence and know that much more than their honor is threatened. Their freedom, home and very way of life is at stake.

"From the first words to the last pages, this novel has its eye on history and manages an understanding of two cultures that claimed the same land," says Native American playwright and author, Diane Glancy. "With courage and bravery on both sides, Ellerbeck struggles for fairness in a clash of cultures so tremendous, the shock waves are still picked up.... This book faces issues that don't have easy answers: Who has a hold on the truth of a nation's history, and how truth can take different forms."

The book is published by Baker Book House and is available at bookstores, the Baker website, in the Dordt College Campus Bookstore, or by mail from the bookstore by calling 712-722-6416.

About the author:

James Schaap

James Calvin Schaap is a professor of English at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa. He's the author of more than 20 books, including his novels *Romey's Place*, *The Secrets of Barneveld Calvary*, *Home Free* and *In the Silence There are Ghosts*.

A compilation with author Philip Yancey, *More than Words*, was his most recent non-fiction release, in a field of five other non-fiction works, four books of short fiction and nearly a dozen devotional books.

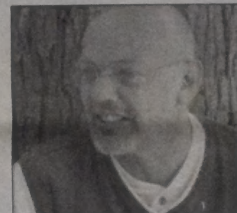
Schaap's work has been awarded five top Evangelical Press Association fiction awards and four Associated Church Press Awards. His novel, *Romey's Place*, was runner-up to Jan Karon for the Christy Award best contemporary Christian novel of 2000.

His articles, essays and short stories have appeared in many magazines, journals and anthologies. Schaap earned a B.A. at Dordt College, an M.A. at Arizona State University and a Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

In writing *Touches the Sky*, Schaap says he wanted to focus on the complexity of our own reactions to things we don't understand clearly, while passing along a greater understanding of Great Plains history.

"I'm really interested in writing a wonderful, moving story, and I was and am simply fascinated by the Ghost Dance, a unique amalgam of Christianity and Native religion that swept almost euphorically throughout the tribes of the West in the late 1880s," commented Dr. Schaap. "The reasons for the phenomena's strength are many; but the ability we have, as human beings, to create what we believe to be spiritual truth is astonishing. I wanted to try to know how a contemporary skeptic, like Jan Ellerbeck (maybe like me), would deal with the profoundly tragic comfort offered by the blessed promises of the Ghost Dance."

Schaap's own ancestors were settlers in South Dakota at the turn of the century, adding another dimension of interest for him.



Church

Christianity needs to render internal accounts, said Conference participants

Paulo Hebmiller

Sao Paulo, BRAZIL [alc]— A total of 740 people from 31 countries participated in the conference on Christianity in Latin America and the Caribbean, held between the end of July and early August in Sao Paulo.

The conference was promoted by the Commission to Study Church History in Latin America (CEHILA), the Catholic University of Sao Paulo, Amerindia, the Ecumenical Grassroots Education Center (CESEP) and the Theology and Religious Sciences Society (SOTER).

Together with representatives from different Christian confessions, academics, who did not necessarily have a church connection, also attended the event. Between 10 and 15 percent of the participants were Protestant.

Mexican Methodist Theologian Elsa Tamez said that she was positively astonished by the conference. According to Tamez, the 1990s marked a regression in ecumenical dialogue. It was as if everyone was rethinking his or her internal situation due to the major changes in the world, she said.

"Here, I was very pleased to note another attitude," affirmed the theologian whose *Epistle from Priscilla*, a book written like a letter addressed to the contemporary Church, was one of the most discussed writings at the event. "Perhaps this meeting is what we

needed to become reanimated," she said.

Israel Batista, Cuban Methodist Pastor and general secretary of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI), said that there is a need for an ecumenical movement within Churches themselves as even historic Protestant denominations have different currents and lines.

"This does not mean not continuing with the Catholic-Protestant dialogue, but in CLAI we have been interested in recovering the Evangelical face. Sometimes we are more interested in speaking with others than with the Evangelical who is at our side," he said. "It is important to remember that it was the Holy Spirit that brought us to this event, and the 21st Century is the Century of the Spirit," he affirmed.

Different models of ecumenicity

Anglican priest, Rev Luis Caetano Greco Teixeira, regional CLAI secretary in Brazil, noted that there are currently several models of ecumenism in the country and the Church needs to decide which road it is going to take.

In his opinion, one of these models prioritizes a very institutional relationship among denominations, with a Lutheran-Catholic hegemony. Others are based on grassroots and local communities, something that is manifested in

studies, reflections and joint service activities.

In 2004, CLAI Brazil will hold a national consultation to discuss different visions of ecumenism. The event will include segments from Pentecostal churches and even denominations that declare themselves to be non-ecumenical.

Pastor Rolf Schinemann, second vice president of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession of Brazil said that in the future, the Pentecostal perspective of spirituality will be reflected in the restructuring of historic churches

"The future of ecumenical and inter-religious relations should be oriented toward forging the trust that will allow historic, Pentecostal and other denominations to break down barriers and prejudices, based on new ways of working on the biblical-evangelical dimension of the Christian faith," he said.

He said that Christianity is not a majority in the world, something that Conference participants recognized, and warned Christianity's credibility is going through internal rendering of accounts.

Among Protestants, the evaluation of the current situation of ecumenical relations, based on the Conference, indicates the need to include new currents, tendencies both in terms of thought and practice within Latin American Churches.

Nigerian peace forum launched as ethnic conflicts continue to erupt

Obed Minchakpu

Abuja, NIGERIA (ENI) — The Nigerian government has launched a major peace initiative cutting across party and religious lines to try to halt sporadic religious and ethnic conflicts that have bedevilled the country since the late 1990s.

Speaking at the launch of a peace forum in Abuja, the nation's capital, September 6, President Olusegun Obasanjo challenged Nigerians to help build a country free of rancor.

"The cost of preventing conflict is far less than the cost of maintaining tranquillity after the eruption of violence,"

Obasanjo called on "the peace of God" to "guide our actions as the nation passes through yet another critical stage of nation-building."

Nigeria has witnessed more than 60 major religious and ethnic conflicts in the past four years which have left more than half a million people dead, according to statistics released at a news conference by the head of the national mint, which prints many official documents.

The chairman of the mint, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi, a former presidential aspirant, noted that these ethnic conflicts had resulted in huge losses of resources, both

material and human, for Africa's most populous nation.

Rochas Okworocha, special assistant to the president on inter-party affairs, said the peace forum aimed to prevent violence and maintain peace throughout the country.

A national peace rally of religious and community leaders is planned for mid-November, said Okworocha, who was appointed national co-ordinator of the peace forum by Obasanjo.

"The cost of preventing conflict is far less than the cost of maintaining tranquillity after the eruption of violence," Okworocha said. "There is no way we can make [economic] progress in Nigeria without peace for Nigerians."

Alhaji Shehu Malami, a member of the elders' council of the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) and chairman of the new peace forum's central working committee, warned that "if nothing is done about the fragile peace of the nation at the moment, Nigeria may be no more in no distant time."

Also attending the forum launch were the Rev. Sunday Mbang, chairperson of the World Methodist Council and president of Nigeria's main ecumenical body, the Christian Association of Nigeria, and Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, seen by many as leader of Nigeria's Muslim community.

Assemblies of God approves 'Divorced Marriages'

The Assemblies of God (AG) Church General Council has approved a controversial resolution giving its 33,000 ministers more authority to officiate at weddings of people who have been divorced. A resolution was approved by the 3,734 delegates to the denomination's biennial convention held in Washington, D.C. this summer.

"This is not a statement in favor of divorce," said Michael Jackson, a pastor from Janesville, Wis., who sponsored the resolution. Instead, Jackson said, the resolution empowers pastors to make their own decisions about who should marry for the 2.7 million-member Pentecostal denomination.

Under current church law, ministers can only officiate at the weddings of church members who were divorced because of adultery or abandonment.

Phil Nissley, a pastor from Taylor, Mich., unsuccessfully urged the general council, composed of delegates and pastors, to reject the change. "It's time to uphold traditional values, godly values," said Nissley, who pointed out that President Bush spoke a day earlier about the importance of marriage.

The council also voted to include women ministers in the governing body of the church, or the general presbytery, which has 260 members. There are 5,502 women ministers in the AG but there are no women among the church's top 17 elected officials.

Nordic ecumenical church body is disbanding

Lars Grip

Stockholm (ENI) — The Nordic Ecumenical Council, which includes the main Christian denominations in the Nordic region, is closing down after a number of key churches announced their withdrawal from the body, which has been criticized for being top-heavy and bureaucratic.

"For 60 years we have striven for ecumenical unity in the Nordic countries, and now this happens," said Gunnel Borgegard, director of the council, whose headquarters are at Uppsala, Sweden.

The council was founded in 1940 to promote joint ecumenical research, conferences and publications in the Nordic countries, but it is expected to wind up its activities in early 2004.

The Lutheran churches in Den-

mark and Norway, and Sweden's Baptist church, announced last year that they intended to pull out of the council. That triggered a financial crisis for the council, which has more than 20 churches and church bodies as members or observers.

"The council did not work well. We are dissatisfied with the way it functioned," said Paul Verner Skaevad, director of the Danish Council of International Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark, explaining the withdrawal of his church from the body.

Lutheran Bishop Carl Axel Aurelius of Gothenburg, Sweden, said that the Nordic Ecumenical Council had been top heavy and that representatives of smaller denominations had often been frustrated.

The Nordic council's synod voted in August to disband but the decision

must be ratified at the synod's next meeting, in March 2004.

Lutheran churches in Finland and Sweden are planning alternative ways of linking denominations in the Nordic area but their proposals are facing criticism from other churches that say they have not been consulted.

Aurelius, along with Risto Cantell, have suggested a take-over of the Sigtuna Foundation, a religious centre in Sweden, which they say could offer a less formal meeting place for Nordic ecumenical work.

But the churches of Denmark and Norway are said by reliable sources to be unhappy that they had not been involved in the process that led to these plans.

Church

Catholic church in Europe cannot find enough priests

By Jonathan Luxmoore

Warsaw, POLAND (ENI) – Roman Catholic church leaders in Europe have been told there is a continent-wide crisis in vocations, with recruitment continuing to slump at most seminaries.

In a report to a meeting in Warsaw of the (Catholic) European Vocations Service, the Rev. Rainer Birkenmaier, a German expert on recruitment to the priesthood, said only Italy and Poland had recorded an increase in vocations.

By contrast, seven out of eight seminaries in traditionally Catholic Ireland had closed over the past decade, and there had been no new recruits at all in 2002-3 at 28 of Spain's 68 seminaries.

"In much of Europe, pastoral work can continue only because priests are working into old age," said Birkenmaier, the outgoing coordinator of the vocations service. "We need an evangelical effort among young people who are interested in faith and the church, but who haven't yet decided whether they wish to serve Christ through their life."

Speaking in Warsaw, Birkenmaier said Catholic church leaders in most European countries have failed to attach enough importance to pastoral work on vocations. "The church must constantly remind priests, pastoral workers, religion teachers, parents and all the faithful of their responsibility for evangelization, and for awakening calls to a consecrated life," he said.

Recruitment problems

Roman Catholic seminaries in several eastern European countries are also facing recruitment problems, including Slovakia, whose seven Roman Catholic seminaries have a total of 606 students.

In western Europe, four seminaries still functioning in England and Wales this year had just 48 ordinands for the priesthood and

58 being trained as permanent deacons, while in predominantly Roman Catholic Belgium, nationwide seminary enrolments have fallen by half in five years to just 26.

In France, where 111 priests were ordained in 2002, seminary admissions fell from 1210 in 1991 to 927 in 2001, according to church data. In Switzerland, for the first time there were no admissions at Roman Catholic seminaries in Geneva, Fribourg, Lausanne and Sion, which usually recruit 5-10 students yearly, the *La Liberté* newspaper reported.

Distorted visions of the priesthood

The Warsaw meeting from July 2 to 6 was hosted by the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, which claims the loyalty of 95 per cent of the country's 38 million inhabitants.

Speaking at the Warsaw conference, attended by church leaders from 23 European countries, the prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, said he believed vocations had also fallen because of "distorted visions of the priesthood."

In a separate report to the meeting, Krzysztof Pawlina, a Warsaw seminary director, said Poland's almost 7000 seminarians currently made up over a quarter of Europe's total and were coming increasingly from city backgrounds.

However, many recruits to the seminaries lack "psychic and emotional maturity," said Pawlina, while some have also been exposed to youth subcultures, including drug and Internet addiction.

"We're well aware that numbers aren't the only criterion for judging the situation," Pawlina said. "One new phenomenon among seminarians is their unwillingness to make sacrifices and their fear of hard, responsible decisions. More and more are asking for breaks before proceeding with ordination."

Priest shortage kindles debate on celibacy

The shortage of priests in many countries has again kindled the debate about celibacy, as many are convinced this is one of the largest obstacles to recruiting young men into the Catholic priesthood. One sure sign that celibacy is being questioned is the fact that several Catholic theologians have published defenses of the policy.

Priests in several dioceses in the US, however, are expected to join fellow priests in Milwaukee who recently petitioned for a change. Groups of priests in New York, Chicago, Boston, Pittsburgh and southern Illinois said they will ask their bishops to consider allowing married priests to help ease the clergy shortage across the country.

About a third of Milwaukee's priests signed a letter to bishops pointing out that a severe priest shortage was forcing many

parishioners to go without the sacraments that only priests can administer. In the US of the 19,081 parishes 3,040 lack resident priests, and they are often assigned to several parishes at once. Dean R. Hoge, a sociologist at the Catholic University of America said that for every 100 priests who die or leave ministry today, only 30 or 40 replace them.

Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of Milwaukee responded that this was the wrong time to raise the issue: "This is the time we priests need to be renewing our pledge to celibacy, not questioning it," he wrote. "The recent sad scandal of clerical sexual abuse of minors, as the professionals have documented, has nothing to do with our celibate commitment."

We are not abandoned to ourselves

Meditation on Psalm 146

Pope John Paul II

Psalm 146 is an "Alleluia," the first of five Psalms that close the whole collection of the Psalter. Hebrew liturgical tradition already used this hymn as a song of praise for the morning. It reaches its culmination in the proclamation of the sovereignty of God over human history. In fact, at the end, the Psalm declares that "the Lord shall reign forever" (v.10).

A consoling truth is derived from this: we are not abandoned to ourselves, the vicissitudes of our day are not dominated by chaos or fate, the events do not represent a mere succession of acts deprived of any meaning or goal. Starting from this conviction, a true and proper profession of faith in God is developed, celebrated with litany in which the attributes of love and goodness are proclaimed which are proper to him (vs.6-9).

Twelve affirmations

God is the creator of heaven and earth, and the faithful custodian of the covenant that binds him to his people. It is he who does justice to the oppressed, gives bread to sustain the hungry, and sets prisoners free. It is he who opens the eyes of the blind, raises the one who falls, loves the righteous, protects the stranger, and upholds the orphan and the widow. It is he who disturbs the way of the wicked and reigns sovereign over all beings and all times.

These are 12 theological affirmations that, with their perfect number, seek to express the fullness and perfection of divine action. The Lord is not a sovereign who is distant from his creatures, but is involved in their history, like one who defends justice, aligning himself with the last, the victims, the oppressed, the unhappy.

A radical choice

Man finds himself, then, before a radical choice between two contrasting possibilities: on one hand is the temptation to "trust in princes" (v.3), adopting their criteria inspired by wickedness, egoism and pride. In reality, this is a slippery and ruinous way, it is "a crooked path and devious way" (Proverbs 2:15), which has despair as its end.

In fact, the Psalmist reminds us that man is a fragile and mortal being, as the word "adam" expresses, which in Hebrew refers to earth, matter, dust. Man, the Bible often repeats, is like a palace that crumbles (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7), a cobweb that the wind rends (Job 8:14), a blade of grass that is green at dawn and dry at night (Psalm 90:5-6; 103:15-16). When death comes upon him, all his plans disintegrate and he returns to dust: "When they breathe their last, they return to the earth; that day all their planning comes to nothing" (v.4).

Sharing God's choices

However, man has another possibility before him, exalted by the Psalmist with a beatitude: "Happy those whose help is Jacob's God, whose hope is in the Lord, their God" (v.5). This is the way of trust in the eternal and faithful God. The amen, which is the Hebrew word of faith, means precisely to be based on the indestructible solidity of the Lord, on his eternity, on his infinite power. But above all it means to share his choices, which the profession of faith and praise, first described by us, has brought to light.

It is necessary to live in adherence to the divine will, to offer bread to the hungry, to visit prisoners, to support and comfort the sick, to defend and welcome strangers, to be dedicated to the poor and miserable. In reality, it is the same spirit of the beatitudes: to decide in favor of that proposal of love that saves us at the end of this life and will then be the object of our examination in the Last Judgment, which will seal history. Then we will be judged on the choice to serve Christ in the hungry, in the thirsty, in the stranger, in the naked, in the sick, in the imprisoned. "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40), the Lord will then say.

Let us conclude our meditation of Psalm 146 with an idea for reflection offered to us by the Christian tradition.

Origen, the great writer of the third century, when commenting on verse 7 of the Psalm, which says: "The Lord gives food to the hungry and sets prisoners free," perceived an implicit reference to the Eucharist: "We are hungry for Christ, and he himself will give us the bread of heaven. 'Give us this day our daily bread.' Those who speak this way, are hungry; those who feel the need for bread, are hungry." And this hunger is fully satisfied by the sacrament of the Eucharist, in which man is nourished by the body and blood of Christ. (Origen 74 Homilies on the Book of Psalms, Milan, 1993, pp. 526-527).

[The above is a translation by Zenit.org of John Paul II's address at his general audience July 2, 2003.]

Opinion

The Root Cause of Anti-Americanism: An Assessment (Part 4)

Harry Antonides

[The intellectuals] bear the responsibility for deciding anew how the world really is, or how it ought to be.... Installed, with all due modesty, in the vanguard of an aroused citizenry, we may set forth once again to redeem a not quite fallen world.... We secular thinkers will find ourselves in the midst of those who take their social conscience... their self-definition from ecclesiastical tradition. (Norman Birnbaum, quoted in Paul Hollander, Anti-Americanism, p. 13.)

Somewhere along the line, the idea took hold that, to be an intellectual, you have to be against it, whatever it is. The intellectual is a negator. Affirmation is not in his or her vocabulary.... So reflexive is the role of the intellectual as negator, so free from accountability, that the very meaning of dissent has been obscured. Hence in the wake of 9/11, those who disagreed with claims that America somehow brought the attacks on herself were said to be "stifling dissent." (Jean Bethke Elshtain, "The groves of Academe: The Dissenters Club," Books & Culture, July/August, 2003.)

[W]hen the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth? (Jesus, Luke 18:8b)

Countless articles, essays, and books are devoted to anti-Americanism, a topic loaded with controversy, animosity and contradiction. No one in his right mind pretends to be able to do justice to this topic in a 3000-word article. But I will attempt to give an overview of what I perceive to be the ideological underpinnings that give anti-Americanism its staying power. (For recommended further reading on this topic, see p.16)

A revolutionary mindset

I believe it is instructive to view Anti-Americanism as an outcropping of what is endemic to our modern, secular age, that is, an ideology of rejection and estrangement. This consists of an overriding sense not merely that there are things wrong with the United States as we know and experience it. No, it is the conviction that it (and by extension all of western society) is fundamentally, or systematically, corrupting and enslaving. What is needed is a radical overturning of the existing order,

if necessary by force. In other words a revolution.

Fortunately, there are still many who have a very different view of life, but they must row against some powerful currents. Though the French Revolution occurred more than two hundred years ago, the ideas that drove that generation of revolutionaries are also influencing today's "progressive" thinkers and activists.

The French Revolution was not merely a one-time upheaval that eventually worked itself out into a return to normalcy. It was far more. It was the benchmark of the modern era: henceforth literally everything would be possible. No more boundaries or timeless norms would set the agenda in the new kingdom of Man. Man now was in control and the future was unlimited. The cry of "No God, no Master" would be the guiding principle of the truly enlightened.

Skipping fast forward to the 20th century, we see a collage of tumultuous events, including rapid industrialization, the Russian Revolution of 1917, two calamitous world wars, the Depression, de-colonization, the Cold War, computerization, space travel, and now the war on terrorism – these have shaken all the old certitudes, particularly the belief in inevitable progress. But one thing has endured in the minds of the "progressive" thinkers and pacesetters of public opinion in the universities, the media, and the leading foundations and think tanks that have sprouted like weeds. That is the conviction that western society is incurably sick and can only be made whole by a radical overhaul.

The totalitarian temptation

This is the reason that despite the collapse of Soviet communism, Marxist ideology is still alive and well in the universities and other "progressive" pockets of the West. For Marxism is the pre-eminent ideology of negation and destruction, while it promises to deliver a world of justice and harmony.

The contemporary Marxists or pseudo-Marxists attribute the failure of Soviet communism to the shortcomings of Stalin and his henchmen. They were bad people who derailed the revolution. Ditto for the other murderous leaders in Vietnam, Cambodia, China, and some might even admit in Cuba, although there are even those who hold the United States responsible.

They persist in believing that human failings led to the disasters of these experiments, but the promised Utopia of humanity, equality and justice of Marxist ideology/faith still beckons.

Despite unspeakable horrors of the Stalinist and Maoist versions of communism, with its victims in the millions and the utter ruination of entire nations, many intellectuals continued to praise what they perceived to be the coming of a new and harmonious society. Thousands of "political pilgrims" traveled to Russia and China and reported to a mostly credulous audience that the communists were constructing a new civilization.

Sidney and Beatrice Webb could write in glowing terms about Stalinist Russia in their 1936 book *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* Walter Duranty of the *New York Times*, whom Malcolm Muggeridge called "the biggest liar of any journalist I ever met," wrote similarly while Stalin was putting in place one of the most cruel and murderous regimes in modern times. The term "evil empire" was no exaggeration.

The determination to believe against all the evidence to the contrary in the possibility of a new and humane society, even one achieved by violence and trickery, caused some to persist in supporting communism. Bitter battles were fought within the trade unions of North America as well as among the intelligentsia in the United States. (For a gripping story about this, see Whittaker Chambers' autobiography *Witness*.)

The revolution of the 1960s witnessed an outpouring of mindless anger against all traditional institutions and authority. Riots broke out in the major American cities. President John Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. Five years later his brother Robert and the eloquent Black leader/preacher Martin Luther King were also gunned down. Some radical groups, such as the Black Panthers and the Weather Underground, preached and practiced violence as a means to liberate the oppressed in Amerika. The Vietnam war became the focal point of massive demonstrations and riots that raised the contempt for America to a fever pitch.

Peter Clecak described this mood as "a compound of moral anger, self-righteousness, and personal resentment." Todd Gitlin

wrote that the alienation that marked the 1960s amounted to a wide-ranging rejection of American society and culture:

"Little by little, alienation from American life – contempt even for the conventions of flag, home, religion, suburbs, shopping, plain homely Norman Rockwell order – had become a rock-bottom prerequisite for membership in the movement core." (Quoted in Hollander, p. 10)

All the while, there were plenty of voices in the media and among the intelligentsia who were eager to excuse the violence and mayhem, arguing that the perpetrators were right to fight against an unjust and oppressive system. They were only acting in justified self-defense, they argued. In fact, this was the defense used by lawyers who succeeded in getting murderers off scot-free. The madness of this travesty eventually struck home, and some left the "movement" in disgust.

Second thoughts

A few had the courage to speak out against the violence and destruction they had witnessed firsthand. Peter Collier and David Horowitz, authors of *Destructive Generation: Second thoughts About the '60s*, showed that the so-called freedom fighters against injustice were in fact murderous criminals who did not stop at killing their own buddies and even their benefactors.

Fay Stender, the crusading feisty lawyer who worked tirelessly and often successfully to have criminals, even murderers, acquitted became one such victim herself. In May 1979 she was shot by a member of the same militant Black clique she had often defended in court. She survived but was severely disabled and died (by suicide) in Hong Kong in her 48th year, a bitter, lonely, and totally disillusioned fighter for a lost cause.

The outrageous and criminal defiance of all authority and standards of civil behavior coupled with the revelations of the misdeeds of Stalinist Russia in 1956 by Nikita Khrushchev led the more thoughtful dissenters to turn their backs on their erstwhile revolutionary friends. Their stories make for fascinating reading.

The conflict between the democratic West and communist totalitarianism remained in full force

and came to expression in the widely accepted notion that the United States and the Soviet Union were morally equivalent and were equally responsible for the Cold War. The radical left has even gone beyond the notion of equivalence and argues that the United States is a serious threat to world peace and the cause of Third World poverty.

This is what gets us right into the controversy about the role of the United States, the leadership of President George W. Bush, the aftermath of 9/11 and the wars that liberated Afghanistan and Iraq from their fanatic and murderous regimes.

To understand and rightly analyze the true nature of anti-Americanism is a difficult assignment because its main stream is made up of many tributaries, some of which are murky and filled with ravenous piranhas. Furthermore, our task is the more difficult because there are many reasons to be critical of the moral failings so obvious in the United States, where everyone is free to speak openly and to say and write things whether they are true or false, or even treasonous.

In making sense out of a confusing picture we need to distinguish between the criticism that is fueled by hatred and a desire to destroy, and the kind that is inspired by love and a desire to build on that which is good and admirable about the United States. (Contrast the rantings of a Chomsky and *The Nation* with the pleadings of a Charles Colson or William Bennett.)

Secular prophets

Fundamentally, anti-Americanism is driven by the attempt to eliminate the past as that has been influenced by the Christian faith and to replace it with a thoroughly secular understanding of the good life. That worldview was succinctly defined in the 1973 Humanist Manifesto, which declares that there is no supernatural, no divine purpose or providence, no deity to save us, but that we must save ourselves. Its signatories further state that morality and ethics are derived from human experience, and that we humans create our own meaning. In other words, we are able to achieve an "abundant and meaningful life" guided by reason and good intentions.

Intellectuals in the democratic

Opinion

West occupy the position of leadership in the heady undertaking so confidently mapped out in this manifesto. (See the statement of Norman Birnbaum at the beginning of this article.) They are the pre-eminent storm troopers of secularism, or modernism (now post-modernism). The problem with secularism is that it either loses itself in nihilism (life has no meaning), or it must invent a new source of meaning or purpose for life. All ideologies (notable Marxism) are such attempts to invent meaning, and all of them result in cruel tyrannies.

This is a time to carefully assess the world situation and the role of the United States as the pre-eminent world power. What is complicating America's role is the fact that it is a severely divided nation. In popular language this division is described as a conflict between the Left and the Right, also referred to as liberalism (not the traditional type of liberalism) versus conservatism.

The trouble with these terms is that they are inexact and depend a great deal on context and on the intentions of those using these terms. However, in general the term Left refers to an optimistic belief in the malleability of human nature and social/political institutions. (The Humanist Manifesto fits within that category.) The Right tends to have a much more limited view of our human capacity to construct the world according to our own design. It is especially in the political arena that this conflict is evident in the United States, but in fact it permeates all of society. (See James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*.)

A dangerous world

Internationally, the same conflict at a much higher level of intensity makes this a very divided and dangerous world. Religious fanatics in the name of Allah have declared war on the United States and its allies, and they are engaged in a deadly campaign of terror. Right now the western democracies have in their midst those who are scheming to do us harm. Nobody knows their numbers nor their whereabouts, or what they may yet accomplish in committing murder and sabotaging the infrastructure that we have come to depend on for our very existence. Nobody knows where they will

strike again.

We should not fool ourselves. The declaration of war against the United States as the Great Satan is ultimately aimed at the entire West. Removing the Taliban and the Baathist thugs happened because the Americans were prepared to take on, at great risk and cost, a very difficult task. It has opened up possibilities for the flourishing of freedom and a measure of normalcy that the current populations of these countries have never experienced. It has also destroyed some major bases of the enemy and thereby curtailed its ability to do what it did on September 11, 2001.

The task of the coalition soldiers in that part of the world is dangerous and difficult. Instead of heaping scorn on what they are doing while putting their lives on the line, we should reward them with profound gratitude – and our prayers. Nobody can be sure about the final outcome, and things can still go terribly wrong. Now is the time for the democratic world to do everything possible to retain what has been accomplished until freedom is secure in the newly liberated countries. This is not the time to stand back and find fault, but to support the United States and its allies in an extremely difficult assignment while their troops are now daily subjected to deadly terrorist attacks.

Recently I read of two different incidents that give a clear demonstration of the contrast between a hate-filled religious zeal aimed at the United States, and the decency and generosity of the American people reflected in their soldiers.

First, here is a statement by a Muslim predicting/threatening war

against the United States:

"I don't think there's a war here, a war front here in the United States at this point. I think if the whole scenario continues the way it has, inevitably the United States is going to reach a type of war front. Yeah. But not right now." (Mohammad al-Asi, Islamic Education Center, Potomac, Maryland, 1994. Quoted in Steven Emerson, *American Jihad*, p.61.)

Second, this is an excerpt about a recent church service of American soldiers in Iraq:

"A number of first-time fathers stood up to announce the birth of babies this week, reminding us what these men have given up to be here. During prayer call at the Protestant services there were requests from sergeants and officers for wisdom so that they might ably lead the soldiers under them. I was struck that several requests for prayer for Iraqis were offered up by the servicemen in the congregation – prayers for the safety of Iraqi civilians, and even for Iraqi soldiers, that they might recognize U.S. troops as "liberators not enemies," and not to throw their lives away. "This camp is full of that characteristically American combination of no-nonsense ferocity hard amidst deep decency and kindness. The noblest, and rarest, mix for any military setting." (Karl Zinsmeister, "How America's Swat Team Helped Swat Saddam," *The American Enterprise*, June 2003, P. 31.)

An influence for good

I can imagine that some critics of this piece might say to me: "Do you mean to say that the Americans are the embodiment of goodness and that anyone who dares to criticize them is evil?" I do not

mean any such thing.

The United States is suffering from the same spiritual malaise that is afflicting the rest of us. It is burdened by all the forces of modernism with its rampant hedonism and materialism, evident in the breakdown of marriage and the family, abortion on demand, crime, drug addiction, corruption, political correctness sleazy politics and ditto entertainment. The list goes on and on.

However, the United States is not one uniform entity of evil and corruption, as depicted by its homegrown and foreign radical critics. Despite all the wrongs so clearly and openly trumpeted by so many, you will also find in this country, healthy families and communities, a love of freedom, the conviction that some things are worth fighting for, and a spirit of generosity that comes to expression in helping the needy nearby and far away. This is the nation that is providing a home for millions of newcomers who experience their new country as a place of freedom and opportunity. The United States may well be the most Christian nation today, at least in the West – although considering the current state of Christianity, that may not mean all that much. But it is something.

The much-maligned neoconservative movement in the United States, which includes a Christian component, is effectively challenging the mainline establishment in the print and other media. They include authors, essayists and commentators who excel in presenting a thoughtful defense of what is right and honorable about the United States. Those who want to seriously explore the burning issues of our time will find a wealth of information and insights that they will not find in the establishment literature.

Our time is marked by the belief that all things are relative. All issues and conflicts can be reduced to matters of opinion, interests, or preferences. If that were so, nothing can be resolved by appealing to what is true and right, but inevitably all conflicts will become contests of brute power.

I wonder whether this trendy relativism is not the deepest reason why those steeped in anti-Americanism are furious when the United States declares certain states to be evil. To call anything or any one evil is a cardinal sin

according to the intelligentsia that has done away with the notion of sin because it believes that there is no abiding standard of truth. Especially Christians who confess that the Bible is true should appreciate the courage of leaders who dare to call evil by its right name. That such plain speaking is now an act of courage that arouses intense anger and vituperation is an indication of how far we already have slipped down the proverbial slippery slope.

There is something else that its radical critics are getting all wrong. The United States has served as a buffer against the threat of the Soviet empire for nearly half a century at immense cost, including the loss of many lives. We should not trivialize its willingness to spend its resources and manpower to protect the free world and even some nations that are harboring the terrorists who have vowed to destroy it.

To call the United States a terrorist state that is a threat to the world and responsible for the impoverishment of the Third World are malicious lies. These lies are repeated endlessly in the Arab world (and in the West) and add immensely to the difficulties the United States and its allies are facing. Even now some are so blinded by their hatred that they want the United States to fail in its attempt to help establish freedom and normalcy in Iraq. They are describing the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq in the most negative terms and seem not to care one whit about the terrible fate that would befall the people of these countries should the United States not persevere in helping them to build free and democratic societies.

This is the time to stand with the United States against the lies and distortions hurled against it, even if we have certain reservations and misgivings about the details. The world situation is precarious. There are evil forces out to destroy and kill. To defend ourselves against them requires more than endless conferences and United Nations' resolutions. Sometimes what is needed is military force and the kind of determined leadership now provided by President Bush.

May God bless America.

Harry Antonides

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See Recommended Readings p. 16



Education

Teachers

Ron DeBoer

For me life is book-marked by Septembers. September simultaneously marks the end of summer and the beginning of a new school year. This September, we have one kid entering kindergarten, one kid entering middle school, one kid attending junior high and yet another kid off to high school – all for the first time.

Each has been out shopping with her mother since the back-to-school sales started at the end of June: each spent the Labor Day holiday biking past her school to make sure it hadn't grown legs and moved to another district and they wouldn't be able to find it on the first day of school.

Already the supper time talk has swung around to teachers, with each older kid sharing her biases about monster and awesome teachers alike. Like which teachers tell sick jokes; which teachers hate kids; which teachers still wear clothes from the decade they graduated teacher's college; which teachers are soooooo incredibly cool.

When I raised my hand to get one word in before desert, I asked the kids what qualities they thought made a good teacher. Their responses were as varied as their hairstyles. Facial expressions are high on their list of important items teachers need to work on.

The fourteen-year-old says her grade eight math teacher always glared at everyone, as if smiling was a sign of weakness and everyone would immediately stop multiplying and subtracting if they felt the teacher was happy.

The twelve-year-old hates it when teachers ask for answers and nod politely before giving all the answers themselves.

The nine-year-old likes her teacher to be in a good mood. Teachers who yell and spend the day threatening and punishing are quickly dismissed in her books.

The five-year-old likes it when her teacher sits on the floor and plays with her. She likes to be noticed and praised.

What I'm hearing from my daughters are qualities not necessarily taught in teacher's

college. There are no Personality 101 or Voice and Facial Etiquette courses at Dordt or Althouse. The qualities they admire and remember in their teachers include whether or not their teachers are happy most of the time, whether or not they genuinely care about students' lives and whether or not they respect students' interests. Not a word about punctuation, division or whether or not Hamlet was insane.

Teachers in early grades

Later in the evening, as I thought about my own classroom and hallway demeanor and began that long yearly process of preparing my mind both personally and professionally for the upcoming school year, I began to think back about my own teachers, which ones stand out in my mind and why, which ones made a lifelong impact on me, both negatively and positively.

I started out loving school. The few memories I have of kindergarten and grades one and two are all positive. That was in the early 70s when teachers, reflecting the culture of the 60s and 70s, were trying out all kinds of new teaching styles. My desk was always in a group – not in rows as my older brothers were; we were encouraged to experiment and try new ways of learning – not learn in a lock-step "See Jane Run" method with the rest of the class. I remember going to the Penny Carnival and buying doodads brought in by the teachers and older students. The playground was our pirate ship; the bulletin boards exploded in color.

Good teachers, like good editors and referees, are invisible; they do such a good job you don't even notice they are doing such a good job. My early teachers were like that.

Then I got Miss Burnside in grade three. We got off on the wrong Birkenstock the first day when she heard me tell my buddy Steve Clark the teacher's name was actually Miss Sideburn. That was a felony of such magnitude I was moved immediately to the front of the class.

She squinted at me for the rest of the

school year. Miss Burnside wore little yellow-tinted John Lennon glasses; her hair was perfectly combed and it cascaded down her many tasseled jackets to her backside; some days she wore a head band; other days she painted her finger nails black; most days she did both.

I don't remember a word of what I learned off her blackboard, or from Sideburn herself. The one memory, however, that stands out for me is that she grounded me from Field Day because I had misbehaved in some obviously grand way – probably attempted murder or armed robbery – the previous day. Knowing how much I loved sports and to add salt to my wound, she sat me by the window so I could watch my classmates run races and compete in tug-of-wars.

I spent most of my Sunday nights that school year sadly watching the Beachcombers – the show we watched before we had to go to bed – because I knew what awaited me in the morning was Sideburn's permanent snarl. There was a woman who missed her true calling as an immigration officer.

Thankfully, the following September I found myself in an open concept classroom and in the presence of a warm, competent teacher named Mrs. Elder. My Opa died on Halloween night that year. My strongest memory of grade four is Mrs. Elder's hand on my shoulder, simply patting me gently the morning after Opa had died, telling the other kids in my group that I would be very sad today because I had lost someone special. I would've defended Mrs. Elder to the death that year.

At the end of my year with Mrs. Elder, I feared another Sideburn; rumor had it all the odd numbered grades were the toughest and the principal put the old battle axes in the odd number grades. As it turned out, Mrs. Belbeck, my grade five teacher, was instrumental in making grade five my number one favorite school year, and she was influential in shaping me as a writer, the first of several teachers I admire for instilling in



me a love of words and the feeling that my voice mattered.

Mrs. Belbeck was an experienced teacher – a grandmotherly sort, although she was probably in her mid forties. Unlike Sideburn, who seemed to loathe my very being the moment I clanged my steel lunch box on the shelf at the back of the room, Mrs. Belbeck smiled grandly when I first walked into her classroom.

The shelves by the windows in her classroom were cluttered with atlases and science projects; her desk covered with teetering piles of books, and her walls plastered with student work from previous years. If fellows in hard hats were digging a hole on the street in front of the school, Mrs. Belbeck would send a group of students out to interview the workers and report back to the class. If someone was reading a book, Mrs. Belbeck would pick it up, read the back cover and tell that kid the book looked "marvelous" or "spell-binding."

Writing a poem

One spring morning we walked into Mrs. Belbeck's classroom to find a new bulletin board. On it was every bird native to Ontario: robins, finches, red-winged black



Education

birds. She played a tape recording of each of the bird's sounds then took us outside to identify as many of them as we could. We knelt down to look at crocuses sprouting from the soil and we peered at the tadpoles in the school pond.

When we got back inside, we found lined paper on our desk – Mrs. Belbeck was truly magical! – and our teacher asked us to write a poem about spring. Before that day, I had never considered writing a poem about anything, but something seared through my mind at that moment. I wanted to write about spring – badly. My pencil was forming words before I could lower it to the paper I was so brimming with ideas.

When I was finished, I looked up to see Mrs. Belbeck smiling widely over my shoulder. She picked up my paper with one hand and covered her mouth with her other one. Then she looked at me seriously.

"I'd like to keep this poem," she said. "May I keep this poem?"

I nodded.

By then my writing muse had fluttered away, and I was thinking about the recess soccer game against the grade sixes.

The following day I stepped off the big yellow school bus, walked through the front doors of our school and found my poem on huge easel paper in the main foyer. Beside it was a Norman Rockwell mural painting of a straw-hatted boy with a fishing pole and a dog. My words were displayed for all to see and will forever be burned into my brain:

Springtime is that time of year
To get going fishing with your gear
Cast your line in then you wait
For the fish to bite the bait.
When you catch one reel it in
Then the cleaning will begin
Then comes cooking oh what fun
Then you eat until your done.

These were my first ever published words, and while they certainly will never be archived, Mrs. Belbeck made you feel like you'd just spun out a Governor General's award winner.

Years later, in high school, another English teacher, who missed his calling, would undo much of what Mrs. Belbeck had begun to mold in me. Across the bottom of one of my short stories in English composition, he wrote, "Can't you write about anything but sports?!"

Yes, those were exclamation marks, and I haven't forgotten those words after all these years, either. They stung, and for a long time I lost my fervor to write. I became self-conscious about what I was writing about because I had annoyed a teacher, a one-man audience who held in his hand the power to inspire wider exploration or stifle me. He did the latter because I wrote about something that didn't interest him.

Note to all teachers: "Rule number one



about teaching... Nothing you do is about you. It's about the student."

My adolescent response, of course, was to bill him in every conceivable way for the damage and embarrassment he had inflicted on me.

When, years later, I became a teacher at this same school, I came to a fuller understanding of this teacher. I was cleaning out the filing cabinets, and I came across a set of June exams for the class I had taken with him. To my dismay, none of the exams had a mark on them, but had percentages on the front page to disguise the fact they hadn't been evaluated. I don't think the school system mourned this teacher's departure a couple of years later.

Teachers qualities

Integrity, honesty, diligence and accountability. When I think about the teachers my daughters will have this school year, I pray their teachers will model these qualities in their own daily walks. I pray that the Mrs. Belbecks of the world will be the ones holding the lanterns along my girls' paths.

In grade six my parents placed us in a new private school which met in the basement of our church. There were seven or eight other kids in my class for my remaining years in elementary school. Our teacher was Mrs. Pitman, who was also the school's principal.

Our classroom consisted of kids from grades five to eight. Mrs. Pitman whipped a bunch of farm kids into shape in short order. She had already retired from a long illustrious career in teaching and had come out of retirement because she loved kids and saw starting a new school as a real challenge. She shared with us stories of her trip to the Holy Land and genuinely lived out her faith in her teaching craft, which, as a

teacher, is what I appreciate most about her today. She didn't allow a moment to go by that didn't praise God's creation in geography, history or language, something we didn't always appreciate until years later, which, of course, Mrs. Pitman knew then.

In high school, several teachers greatly influenced me. I was not the best student in my early high school years, and while some of my teachers might have stronger adjectives to describe me, the teachers I long remember are the ones who could see past my adolescent rages and immaturity.

One of my favorite teachers was Mr. Schat, who taught us history at Chatham Christian High School. Mr. Schat is one of those rare breeds of teachers whom all students immediately love and who immediately loves all students in return.

I don't know whether it was his trusting, bearded face or the twinkling eyes that quickly followed first eye contact with him, but Mr. Schat was the type of teacher you visited after school because you just wanted to tell him things. He was one of those teachers to whom you would divulge private thoughts because you felt safe telling him; it was as if his knowing them made your existence more important.

The thing I remember about Mr. Schat is his trusting nature. His philosophy was that if you gave him no reason to distrust you, he unconditionally trusted you, even when the twinkle in his eye told you he knew you were lying about that interview you'd fabricated about the Russian immigrant neighbor.

This is a specific philosophy I have tried to apply in my classroom and with my own kids. Early in my teaching career I had the opportunity to teach beside Fred Schat and to teach several of his own children, all of whom are testaments that Fred's (and Henny's, too!) approach to teaching and parenting is successful.

The sum total

I count myself blessed that God placed many excellent teachers in my way in high school. While I was teetering on that adolescent fence between going down the straight and narrow path or going down that other darker, windy one, many of my teachers were the difference during those delicate years.

Mr. Brink taught me to be passionate about my subject matter.

Mr. Doornenbal, a fresh rookie teacher

who arrived in our school when I was in grade eleven, shaped me in ways he'll never know simply because he liked and listened to me. I chose Dordt College to become a teacher because Mr. Doornenbal was himself a graduate of Dordt College.

Mr. Kruisselbrink taught me gentleness and diligence in his subject matter. Later, when I taught with Bernie Kruisselbrink, I soon found out he was the most valuable person on staff for the behind-the-scenes tasks he chose to do to make the school function smoothly. Now retired, Bernie's absence is still felt at Chatham Christian High.

Finally, the teacher who has probably most shaped my writing life is Dordt professor James Schaap, with whom I took many courses. Schaap was a big time writer who'd published books and won fiction writing awards about Christian life in the American mid-west. I learned more from Schaap about writing than from any other source. He shared with us his works-in-progress, asked us for help in his writing, and did it all with such a honed persona that he didn't care whether or not you got on his wagon.

I sprinted like crazy to jump on his wagon. To me, he was the wise sage of writing, and I drank in every word he spoke and wrote on my own pieces of writing. I wanted to be a writer so badly I can to this day still remember specific mistakes I made on Schaap-evaluated pieces of writing and detailed advice he scrawled in the margins.

In the end, I realize that I am the sum total, the aggregate of all of these fine teachers in my life. While, as a teacher, I am several thousand kilometers due north of infallibility, I hope my students see the Mrs. Belbeck, the Mr. Schat and the Dr. Schaap in me each day.

And it is my hope that my daughters will take from each of their teachers this year those qualities that will make them fine students, fine citizens and fine Christians. My daughters are works-in-progress – we all are – and the potters who mold them have a tremendous responsibility in positively shaping them. I pray for these teachers and schools every morning on my two kilometer walk to my own school, and I would encourage all churches to pray for all students, both Christian school kids, and especially Christian kids in public schools.

Wherever we teach this year, whether as professional teachers in the school system or as Sunday School, catechism, GEMs, Cadets, Friendship, or Adult Bible Study teachers we should heed Paul's words to Titus: "In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech...."

Or more familiarly, the fruits of the spirit provide an excellent checklist for how to approach our students, with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. In other words, teach with Jesus as a mentor.

Education/Science

The Little Boy

by Helen Buckley

Once a little boy went to school.
He was a quiet little boy.
And it was quite a big school.
But when the little boy found that
he could go to his room
By walking right in from the door
outside
He was happy.
And the school did not seem
Quite so big any more.

One morning,
When the little boy had been in
school awhile,
The teacher said,
"Today we are going to make a
picture."
"Good," thought the little boy.
He liked to make pictures;
He could make all kinds:
Lions and tigers,
Chickens and cows,
Trains and boats—
And he took out his box of cray-
ons
And began to draw.

But the teacher said, "Wait!
It is not time to begin!"
And she waited until everyone
looked ready.

"Now," said the teacher,
"We are going to make flowers."
"Good!" thought the little boy.
He liked to make flowers,
And he began to make beautiful
ones
With his pink and orange and blue
crayons.

But the teacher said, "Wait!
And I will show you how."
And it was red, with a green stem.
"There," said the teacher.
"Now you may begin."

The little boy looked at his
teacher's flower.
Then he looked at his own flower.
He liked his flower better than the
teacher's.
But he did not say this.
He just turned his paper over.
And made a flower like the
teacher's.
It was red, with a green stem.

On another day,
When the little boy had opened
The door from the outside all by
himself,
The teacher said,
"Today we are going to make
something with clay."
"Good," thought the little boy.
He liked clay.
He could make all kinds of things
with clay:

Snakes and snowmen,
Elephants and mice,
Cars and trucks —
And he began to pull and pinch
His ball of clay.

But the teacher said:
"Wait, it's not time to begin!"
And she waited until everyone
looked ready.
"Now," said the teacher,
"We are going to make a dish."
"Good," thought the little boy.
He liked to make dishes,
And he began to make some
That were all shapes and sizes.
But the teacher said, "Wait!
And I will show you."
And she showed everyone how to
make
One deep dish.
"There," said the teacher,
"Now you may begin."

The little boy looked at the
teacher's dish.
Then he looked at his own.
He liked his dishes better than the
teacher's.
But he did not say this.
He just rolled his clay into a big
ball again
And made a dish like the teacher's.
It was a deep dish.

And pretty soon
The little boy learned to wait.
And to watch.
And to make things just like the
teacher's.
And pretty soon
He didn't make things of his own
anymore.
Then it happened that the little boy
and his family
Moved to another house,
In another city,
And the little boy
Had to go to another school.

The school was even bigger
Than the other one.
And there was no door from the
outside
Into his room.
He had to go up some big steps,
And walk down a long hall
To get to his room.

And the very first day
He was there.
The teacher said:
"Today we are going to make a
picture."
"Good!" thought the little boy.
And he waited for the teacher
To tell him what to do.
But the teacher didn't say anything
She just walked around the room.

Science as
god a disaster

Vern Gleddie

Most Canadians believe life's problems can be solved by pushing a button, downing a pill, or calling a specialist. My own dad, in response to the failure of some technology would repeat the mantra, "They will find (a solution)."

Don't we all reserve some space in our hearts for the mysterious seemingly omniscient and omnipotent "they"?

As I write, electricity is slowly being restored to southern Ontario and parts of northeast United States after a massive blackout that directly affected 50 million people. There are warnings of more of the same for an indefinite period of time. Most people, though, are not cutting back on power usage whether for washing cars or lighting huge advertising billboards. And indeed why should they when their deity promotes profligacy? The temporary power outage was only a small jolt to faith in technology.

Self-delusion

Science reigns supreme in our society. We stand in awe of the workings of the video and the computer. In our ignorance we are prone to trust technocrats to quickly prevail over anything that stands in the way of "progress."

Perhaps it is not obvious to the disciples of technology that they have set up their own gods. The idols are constructed in labs by other worshipers. Self-delusion of the worst kind!

It is foolish to offer oneself hostage to polymers, transistors, chemicals, fossil fuels and so on. How is it that we have given over our very existence to a handful of scientists willing to take on the mantle of savior?

The folly of science as god is well illustrated by the whole mad cow (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy — BSE) episode that has thrown Canadian agriculture into turmoil. The word is that "science" has done its job and now it is up to the politicians to restore beef markets.

But the science has not been "done"! Science has scandalously pronounced "infection" as the cause of BSE. It is scandalous because the "infectious" explanation for BSE remains only theory. Contrary to popular belief, the agent of infection has yet to be identified.

In spite of that, borders remain closed to trade, and expensive testing, mass slaughter and waste of formerly valuable products continue. Furthermore, the viability of agriculture in Canada is in grave jeopardy, having been largely abandoned to BSE and other catastrophes. It is a presumptuous wreck!

When she came to the little boy
She said, "Don't you want to make
a picture?"
"Yes," said the little boy. "What
are we going to make?"
"I won't know until you make it,"
said the teacher.
"How shall I make it?" asked the
little boy.

"Why, any way you like," said the
teacher.
"And any color?" asked the little
boy.
"Any color," said the teacher.
"If everyone made the same pic-
ture,
And used the same colors,
How would I know who made

what?
And which was which?"

"I don't know," said the little boy.
And he began to make a red flower
with a green stem.

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE



Causes of mad cow disease

Given the failure of decades of research to find an infective agent for the spongiform diseases, one would think that at least some research institution or the government of some beleaguered country such as Great Britain or Canada would jump at any plausible alternate theory backed up by a huge volume of field observations. There is just such a creditable and sophisticated theory advanced by Mark Purdey of Great Britain, that takes into account a number of environmental factors associated with BSE.

All factors have to do with compromising the protective capacity of brain prions. Purdey has traveled the world investigating clusters of BSE and other spongiform disease cases, observing related factors in the environment and in the process discovering repeated patterns. His 20 years of work is finally garnering some interest from a few scientists, politicians and journalists in his own country, but the disciplines represented are as a whole ignoring his work and even antagonistic toward it.

Apparently Purdey's proposals are too radically different from the accepted line of reasoning. He, a farmer self-educated in biochemistry, comes from outside the accepted fraternity of scientists. He challenges the tight confines of the scientist's world. His starting point has been what "science" derides as anecdotal.

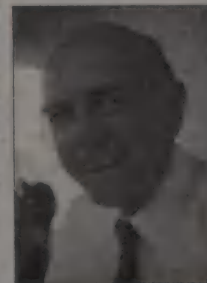
I don't know whom Mr. Purdey serves, though I have been in dialogue with him along with other farmers. But he obviously does not kow-tow to pseudo-science (science as god), which establishes narrow criteria. He has challenged blind faith in the scientific community's explanation for the origin and treatment of BSE.

Ironically, Mr. Purdey's work could be described as more truly scientific because it is not beholden to any preconceived notions. His theory of multifactored and non-infective agent conditions comes from a willingness to consider all unusual circumstances surrounding the onset of BSE.

Governments, however, continue to pour millions into the mad cow situation on the basis of discredited theory. Agriculture hangs by a thread while time runs out. When will real science (as servant) be done to ferret out and confirm the real causes of mad cow disease?

Science as god is a dark dead-end street.

Vern Gleddie has a sheep
ranch in near Edmonton, AB



Faith

The Reformation message for today's men & women

John Van Regenmorter

At a seminar for pastors one of the speakers, a psychologist, noted that the Reformation movement sparked by Luther assumed that people had a sense of guilt and a deep desire for atonement. He then argued that this is not the case today. As he put it: "In our modern culture most individuals are not seeking atonement; they are seeking meaning." What are we to make of this? If it is true that the vast majority of people today are not interested in atonement for guilt, should the church continue to address them with the message of Christ's atonement for human sin?

Apparently our modern world has little sense of its estrangement from God, nor does it have much interest in overcoming whatever estrangement it experiences. In *Habits of the Heart*, the classic study of the religious patterns in modern North America, Robert Bellah notes that most participants in his study see the church merely as a means to meet their own personal goals. He also describes the tendency in many churches to de-emphasize the Biblical language of sin and redemption, but to promote the idea of Jesus as the friend who will help us find happiness and self-fulfillment.

Freedom from guilt

The Reformation occurred in a different environment. When Martin Luther lit the Reformation fire, he was not seeking self-fulfillment. Rather, he yearned to be free of the guilt and burden of his sin so that he might enjoy God's favor once more. From his childhood on Luther suffered a keen awareness of his guilt before God. Attempts to overcome his sense of estrangement from God characterized much of his early life. Historian Kenneth Scott Latourette describes Luther's quest this way:

"He sought by the means set forth by the church and the monastic tradition to make himself acceptable to God and to earn the salvation of his soul. He mortified his body. He fasted, sometimes for days on end without a morsel of food. He gave himself to prayers and vigils beyond those required by the rule of his order. He went to confession often daily and for hours at a time. Yet assurance of God's favor and inward peace did not come."

In the well-known account of

his conversion, Luther saw the way of salvation opened up before him while he was in his study cell in Wittenberg in 1512. As Luther later explained it, "Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement, 'the just shall live by faith.' Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through sheer mercy, God justifies us through faith. Thereupon, I felt myself to be reborn and to have passed through open doors to paradise."

As the reformation flame spread, it became obvious that Luther had touched a responsive chord with his generation. His message of grace was good news indeed to people who were much aware of their need for atonement. Church historian Williston Walker has pointed out that a deep sense of sinfulness was the ground note of the religious revival Luther fathered in Germany.

Religion as self-fulfillment

But today the landscape has been altered drastically! One would be hard pressed to find women and men in our culture who are desperately trying to overcome a deep awareness of guilt before the God of heaven and earth. The culture drives them toward the goal of self-esteem and self-fulfillment. How then can we hope to get a hearing from such people for the Gospel? How will such people know that the misery of low self-esteem can be dealt with only when the self stands honestly and humbly before the God of heaven and earth, the God who is the Father of Jesus Christ?

The answer is neither new nor popular. A creed, born out of the reformation and breathing its spirit, puts it this way: It asks: How do you come to know your misery? It answers: The law of God tells me. (Heidelberg Catechism, Q & A 3).

The law of God as the phrase is used here points to the totality of his revealed will. It is the loving, merciful, and just voice of the God who says that true knowledge and worth of the self begins with true knowledge of God and his will for our lives in the world and with our neighbor. When we hear God's voice and so know his will, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit we become conscious of our sinful self and of our need for a Savior.

That was clearly Paul's experi-

ence. He says: "I would not have known what sin was except through the law" (Rom. 7:7). And then he gives a specific example: "I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, 'Do not covet.'" We need God's voice as we hear it in the law to know ourselves truly.

At the foot of the cross

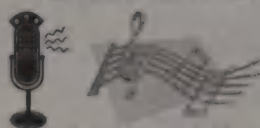
Like an airline pilot who is heading straight for a mid-air collision but is blissfully unaware of it, Paul says there was a time in his life in which he was unaware of the extent of his sinfulness before the Lord. But the Holy Spirit used God's law to show him who he really was, Paul Q. Sinner, whose true self was found only at the foot of the cross.

Let us rely on the Holy Spirit to do the same kind of work today (Jn. 16:8). But let us also be faithful to our calling to declare that word so that women, children, and men of this age may hear and believe the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:14-15).

Devotion to self and self-worth are not lasting nor, ultimately, satisfying. Only our Lord Christ can fill the emptiness of isolated selves and provide the lost with his comfort. But, where there is no sense of being lost, there can be no joy in being found. And when the need for atonement is not felt, there can be no rejoicing in the good news of the ages. "Friend, your sins are forgiven" (Luke 5:20). Forgiveness is the way to real meaning for ourselves and our neighbor.

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Coming Home

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



Tim Antonides

Back in my hometown of Penticton, BC, Andy Moog was a hero and a legend. He was the boy from Penticton who played goal for the Edmonton Oilers and helped lead them to the Stanley Cup in 1984, 85, and 87. When Andy comes to town, he is still noticed and honored.

When the Colorado Avalanche come to Vancouver to play the Canucks, many fans start getting excited about seeing "Burnaby Joe." It's important to people that a great player like Joe Sakic comes from their hometown (Burnaby is a Vancouver suburb). Even though people generally don't like the Avalanche very much, they talk about Burnaby Joe with a certain fondness. He's a home-grown boy.

Hometown heroes

Though this isn't a distinctly Canadian trait to pay special reverence to hometown heroes, I think Canadians are particularly disposed to doing this. Some of it has to do with living next door to such an enormously powerful and influential neighbor. Sometimes we're the little boy next door who's peeking over the fence to see what the big guys are doing. When we get a chance, we proudly declare that such-and-such a celebrity is from Canada.

There's a bit of insecurity at the heart of it. If an American mentions the name of somebody like Shania Twain, Steve Nash (basketball player), or Jim Carrey, chances are they'll quickly be informed, "Yeah, they're from Canada, eh." Of course, it happens all the time in the US too. When we were living in Illinois, I can't count how many times I was told that McLean Stevenson (Captain Henry Blake on "MASH") was from Bloomington, Illinois.

I like that kind of thing. Sometimes I get a little bit embarrassed by how hard Canadians try to point out Canadian successes in the world, but this hometown pride is a great thing. Especially in light of the vagabond nature of sports. Players move back and forth from team to team faster than I can keep up with. It's really hard to develop an allegiance to a certain player knowing that he could be playing for your worst enemy the next year.

Though I'm not a Leafs fan, I used to think of Doug Gilmour as Mr. Maple Leaf. A boy from Kingston playing in Toronto: a true-blue Canadian kid playing for a true-blue Canadian team. Don Cherry liked to point this out as well. It did something weird to my consciousness when he went to the New Jersey Devils in 1997 and then moved back and forth between Chicago, Buffalo, and Montreal for the next five years.

Now he's back with the Leafs again. It feels to me like he's home. I like it.

Community

It's interesting that this hometown thing appeals to me, considering the fact that I've been living in our housing complex for over a year and barely know my neighbors. During the four years we lived in our last house in BC, I think I said hello to a neighbor once. I don't think I even saw the neighbor on the other side of the house.

Community seems to be important to me, and yet I can't be bothered to promote it in my own neighborhood. Like many, I find that something inside me yearns to be connected to a larger enterprise and to feel a communal connection to others.

It's pathetic that I can spend more time worrying about a particular hockey player coming home than I do about making a home for the people that God places in my life.

"Prone to wander, Lord I feel it..."?

Tim Antonides has returned to BC after a year of graduate work to teach and coach at Surrey Christian School



Seniors

Loneliness doesn't have to be a permanent state



Tips for learning to live alone

by Lisa M. Petsche

When a loved one passes away, many older adults face the challenge of learning to live alone. If they've been married for many years, this is a particularly big adjustment. Loneliness may be profound, and difficult to overcome.

If you are in this situation, following are some tips that can help:

- Give yourself permission to feel all of the emotions that surface, including resentment and frustration. Recognize that there will be good days and bad days, and be extra good to yourself on the bad ones. Prepare a list of things to do on such days—indulgences to give you a lift, as well as tasks or projects to tackle that will give you a sense of satisfaction (for example, de-cluttering various areas of your home).

- Accept the reality of your situation. Don't dwell on the past, as it fosters self-pity and prevents you from moving forward.

- Get out of the house every day.

- Look after your physical health: eat nutritious meals, get adequate rest and exercise regularly. This will help ward off depression. Consider joining a dinner club, fitness center or exercise class, which also combats isolation.

- Cultivate some solitary pastimes, such as doing crossword puzzles, woodworking, gardening, writing or sketching. Learn to enjoy your own company, recognizing that it's possible to be alone without feeling lonely.

- Sign up for an adult education course or lessons that interest you—for example, gourmet cooking, pottery or modern jazz. (Check out the programs available at the local senior citizens' center or recreation center as well as educational institutions.) Learning something new can be energizing and confidence boosting, and in the process you might make new friends.

- Get involved in your community by volunteering—perhaps with a neigh-

borhood association, church group, charitable cause, political campaign or environmental issue. Or look for a job if you're able-bodied and finances are a concern.

- Take the initiative in calling friends and relatives to talk or arrange to get together. Instead of waiting for invitations, extend them.

- Do nice things for others, especially those who are also going through a difficult time. This takes your mind off your own situation, boosts your self-esteem and strengthens relationships.

- Find at least one person you can talk to openly, who will listen and understand. Consider joining a community support group for widows, or an Internet one if it's hard to get out or you prefer anonymity.

- Write down your thoughts, feelings and experiences in a journal, chronicling your journey of self-discovery and growth.

- Nurture your spirit by doing things that bring inner peace, such as meditating, practicing yoga, reading something uplifting, listening to soothing music or communing with nature.

- Turn to your faith for comfort, whether it's through private prayer, reflective reading, attending worship more often or talking with your pastor. Pray for guidance and strength in dealing with challenges.

- Take things one day at a time so as not to get overwhelmed. Plan your days so you don't have too much free time on your hands.

- If you don't like coming home to si-



lence, leave the television or radio on when you go out.

- Get a pet. Cats and dogs provide companionship and affection, and give you a sense of purpose. Owning a dog also ensures you get out of the house and get regular exercise, facilitates socialization and offers security.

- If feelings of isolation persist, look into options such as taking in a boarder, sharing accommodation with a relative or friend, relocating to a condominium or apartment in a senior living community or, if your health is frail, moving into a retirement home. Don't make such a major decision hastily, though.

- If you were a caregiver and put your personal life on hold, now is the time to re-invest in yourself, resuming former interests or pursuing new ones, and nurturing neglected relationships as well as expanding your social network.

- Whether or not your loved one's death was anticipated, the reality of being on your own may initially seem overwhelming and perhaps frightening. However, with time, patience and trust in your resilience, you will be able to successfully adapt to your new circumstances. You may even end up growing in ways you could not have imagined.

Lisa M. Petsche is a clinical social worker and freelance writer.

Recommended reading on anti-Americanism

By Harry Antonides

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Opinion

Yes...but

I hate it. This violence. Mangled bodies. Blood. For what? I wonder.

Can somebody give me a plausible reason for this Iraqi undertaking? For what is the world paying such a very high price in precious lives and injured limbs?

The excuse for invading Iraq was its links to terrorism and its threat to the USA. We now know that all this was pure fabrication. We also know that now these very falsehoods have found a home: by invading Iraq and Afghanistan, America has created a heavenly terrorist haven and turned the country into an inhabitants' hell.

Even in the darkest days of Saddam's reign of terror, most Iraqis did not have to worry about personal safety. True, they could not speak their minds, they had to worship Hussein, even though they knew him to be a cruel god who killed tens of thousands, but they could rely on electricity, water and telephone, their daughters could openly display their faces—and there are some beautiful Iraqi women—without fear of being raped, and their sons could safely stroll the streets day and night. No longer.

If our own world were given a choice between chaos with 'democratic freedom' or a police state but with all modern conveniences, I am sure that our representative system would lose out.

Fact is that people in the Muddled Middle East are not very keen on self-rule. A religion that regards women as Islam does can never be truly progressive, just like most Christian churches.

Fact is that chaos breeds chaos. The carnage caused by the Iraqi war has been Al Qaeda's best promotion tool. As was predicted. American troops in the street or on the screens of Arabic television are seen as infidels and Muslim mockers, and out to humiliate them. That is one reason why in Iraq and Afghanistan the devastation from riots, ambushes, suicide bombings is accelerating, and so is the hatred toward America. Every day coalition soldiers are dying. For what?

Bush has created a monster

One thing is clear: Bush, through his perjury, has created a monster. He should be impeached as Jim Payton advocated a few weeks ago in this paper. The lies, the hidden motives, the clumsiness of its military machine, has mushroomed into almost uncontrollable mayhem. With the Israel-Palestine 'road map to peace' in shreds, with a guerrilla war seemingly unstoppable, the USA will be totally on the defensive if the Shiites in South Iraq go on the warpath, creating an Iraq-wide holy war.

The killing of one of their most influential clergymen last month was done to ignite that flame, hoping for retaliation and so generate a civil war. It would take 500,000 US soldiers to keep these two Islam factions apart. If that happens the US

war on both Al Qaeda and the Hussein regime would have suffered a severe blow. Then the entire Islamic world, from Turkey to Indonesia, from Chechnya to Pakistan would be in turmoil, and they would see with their own eyes that the USA is unable to win a war in their region, giving the Middle East nations, including the Palestinians battling Israel, a psychological boost.

Bogged down in a guerrilla war in Iraq,



the US could not possibly invade Syria or Iran or North Korea, the remaining members of the Axis of Evil. The attack on the U.N. building—cruel as it was—was a clear sign to the rest of the world to stay out of Iraq. In vain will Powell, the ex-general and paradoxically the 'dove' among the White House hawks, pled for more international help. And, if Russia, Turkey, India or Pakistan agree, they will exact a high price from the USA, a nation that arrogantly boasted that the U.N. was irrelevant, convinced as it was of a speedy victory and a favorable aftermath.

Cap in hand, the USA is crawling back, begging for soldiers and cash. The attacks on Iraq's soft targets have forced the US to break out of its own concrete wall compounds and increase security for the pipelines, the oil installations, the water supply, and even mosques and hospitals. The more troops are detailed to defensive missions, the fewer are available for offensive operations. So the already overstretched troops will become even more burdened, unless massive reinforcements are rushed in, escalating the already high cost to the US taxpayer.

In short, the situation in the region has reached a crisis stage for the United States. Things are going very wrong for the Bush administration. Bush and his handlers have committed perhaps the greatest act of folly in modern military history by invading Iraq without taking into account the possible consequences.

This brings me to a crucial question: Would you like to be a soldier in Iraq, serving with the 'coalition forces'? Would you re-enlist when your term expires? Before you make up your mind, take a peek at a new website called "Soldiers for the Truth."

There fighters serving in the Middle East can air their misgivings without being called on the carpet, or in this case probably on a Persian rug.

Voices from the front

Here are some raw recordings as registered on this forum, facilitated by David Hackworth, a retired colonel, who 50 years ago (he enlisted at 15 years of age, lying

about his age) fought in World War II in Italy and was wounded 8 times in Korea and Vietnam. He can claim to be the Army's most Decorated Soldier, even though the US Army has no such title. Hackworth has seen more combat and taken more bullets than almost any American soldier still alive. He wrote the Vietnam primer, a book on guerrilla warfare there. So, not just

an armchair soldier, like the current commander in chief, who, as privileged son avoided the battle, but not the bottle.

It is no secret that the over-burdened American army is not a happy one at this point. No wonder. Here is one voice: "Soldiers are living in the dirt, no phone, no contact with home, and no break from the daily monotony at all." And hot as —, I may add: 53° Celsius - 125° Fahrenheit!

Another: "Soldiers get literally hundreds of flea or mosquito bites and they can't get cream or Benadryl to keep the damn things from itching... I am not talking about bringing in the steak and lobster every week, I am talking about basic health and safety issues that continue to be neglected by the Army."

Another: "We did not receive a single piece of parts-support for our vehicles during the entire battle...not a single repair part has made it to our vehicles to date...my unit had abandoned around 12 vehicles. I firmly believe that the conditions I just described contributed to the loss and injury of soldiers on the battlefield."

Laments still another G.I.: "We have done our job...have fulfilled our obligation... but we are still here and are still being mistreated and misled. When does it end...? How many of my soldiers need to die before they realize that we have hit a wall?"

When asked, "How long do you think US troops will be needed in Iraq?" Colonel Hackworth commented: "At least 30 years.... It is going to be a long time — unless the price gets too heavy.... I bet it is costing \$6 billion a month. Where the — is that money going to come from?"

Questioned, "How do you see the combat situation evolving in Iraq?" he replied: "Phase I is to nickle and dime us, but the G

[Guerrilla] is always looking for the big hit — a huge car bomb, something that gets the headlines. How right he was! All the advantages are with the G; he is like an audience in a darkened theater and the US troops are the actors on stage all lit up, so the G can see everything on stage, when they are asleep or when his weapons are dirty."

What kind of war are we fighting?

Hackworth has no great admiration for Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz, the men in charge of the military. "These men concluded that the war would be Slam Bam Goodbye Saddam, followed by victory parades with local Iraqi folks throwing flowers and rice and everything nice, then the troops would come home....(but) we went in light and on the cheap, all based on this rosy scenario. There was another guy who thought the same way I did: his name is Saddam Hussein, who saw the awesome array of forces and said, 'Wait a minute, I will run away for another day.'"

Comparing Iraq to Vietnam, Hackworth commented: "In Vietnam we were fighting World War II. Now in Iraq we have been fighting Desert Storm with tanks. This is a G(uerrilla) war. The American Army is trained to break things and kill people. No tanks are needed here, but stealth and surprise."

In Iraq, as in South Vietnam, massive numbers of American troops are asked not just to fight a war, but to attain an impossible political goal: to establish political self-rule and independence on foreign ground, while a local government cannot survive without the presence of a large and permanent occupation force. The Americans by their very armed presence almost guarantee opposition to any ruling body associated with US interests. In Vietnam the more soldiers were used, the more Vietnamese were killed, the more anger and resentment US policies produced and so fueled the forces of those opposing the Pentagon policies. If Iraq is the same, then the result will also be an increasingly frustrated, home-sick and demoralized army, becoming ever more cynical about 'nation building' and its upper command.

As disgruntled veterans refuse to re-enlist, it could well be that the US in order to maintain large armed forces must either go back to conscription or hire soldiers on the world market, as they did in the Middle Ages: the ultimate form of globalization and outsourcing.

Or will financial constraints curtail US might? More about that in my next column.

Bert Hielema was the moderator for an all candidates meeting held in Madoc on Sept.8.



Christian Living

Becoming Community-Rich

By Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Some years ago I phoned my ninety-year-old neighbor, Pauline. We talked about commonplace things — gardening, my children, getting old. Before I hung up, she said gratefully and repeatedly, "You haven't forgotten me!" I heard the tears in her voice; I felt the tears in my eyes. Community-poor, Pauline daily felt isolation's bitter bite. A simple phone call allowed her to savor community's sweet taste.

As I've become acquainted with community-poor women in varying circumstances — employed and unemployed, widowed, married, divorced, able-bodied and disabled, old and young, settled and uprooted — it has struck me that aside from their need for Jesus as their Savior, their greatest need is to become community-rich and to find a "home."

Author Mary Pipher says, "Home is where you meet the names of the people you meet... Home is where people care if you have a speeding ticket or a fever. It's where people ask about your grandbaby and your daylilies and know your favorite kind of pie" (*The Middle of Everywhere: The World's Refugees Come to Our Town*, Harcourt, 2002, pp. 321).

What does it mean to be community-poor, to exist without a "home" as Pipher describes it? The women I've met have experienced it in these concrete ways. It involves lying awake at night worrying about getting old and not being able to do the yard work any more. It means running out of potatoes and not having someone to take you to the store to purchase a bag. It includes needing clothes and not knowing where to buy them at an affordable price. It means being unable to replace a burnt out light bulb because of fear of falling off a ladder and having no one to do it for you. It entails suffering from ingrown toenails because of the inability, due to arthritis, to reach down and trim them. It means not talking to another person for an entire week.

Doing yard work, buying potatoes, purchasing clothing, replacing a light bulb, trimming toe nails — all are simple tasks when we are community-rich. But for those who are community-poor, these tasks and others often seem insurmountable. And they'll continue to be so until the community-poor person becomes connected with helpful people and useful resources. The adage is true: "It's not what you know, but who you know." Perhaps the community-poor person needs you, a person rich in community because you belong to God and to his people.

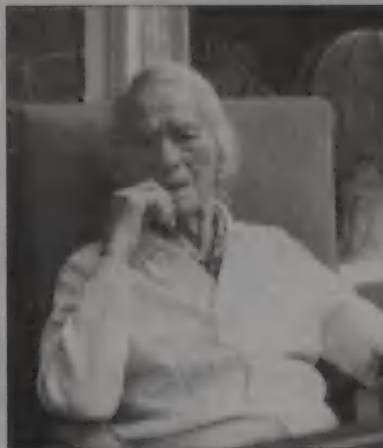
How can you enrich the lives of community-poor women?

Start by getting to know them. Community-poor people live anywhere and everywhere. I've discovered that one way to become acquainted with them is to walk regularly in my neighborhood. Snippets of con-

versation with women I've met along the way have often led to more intimate communication.

In one case, a woman told me of the imminent death of a her husband. She had no children and very little support. Whenever I saw her, I inquired about her husband. After he died, she invited me to her home for coffee. Inside her four walls I sensed the depth of her poverty and tried to enrich her life by being a listening friend.

When you become aware that a woman is community-poor, do something kind for her. If you are community-rich, you've probably been the recipient of kindness. It can then be difficult to imagine how a "newcomer" to kind acts experiences them. Upon receiving a simple meal from me after surgery, one woman said, "I have never experienced such kindness before." In encountering a taste of belonging, the community-



poor woman senses God's love. Howie Stevenson, quoted in Charles Swindoll's *Wisdom for the Way*, says, "God moves

among the casseroles" (Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2000, pp. 257).

Use your connections to enrich the life of a community-poor woman. Is she looking for a meaningful part time job to make ends meet and get her out of the house? Then point out her gifts. If you think she would make an excellent caregiver for housebound elderly people, connect her to people you know who do that kind of work. Does she need her lawn mowed, but can't afford to pay for it? Ask a teenager in your church to volunteer to do the job. Does she need to have her hair cut, but can't get to a hair dresser? Arrange for a ride for her or ask a hairdresser you know to make a house call.

Finally, on her behalf, call on your most important connection, our sovereign and compassionate God. Ask him to make her rich in faith and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Author of all true community.

After months of despair, there is hope in Liberia

Harry der Nederlanden

After some 14 years of sowing the whirlwind in Liberia, President Charles Taylor, one of the many agents of mass mayhem and murder our century has produced, turned power over to an Episcopal leader, and the people of Liberia cheered. During those 14 years an estimated quarter of a million Liberians were slaughtered and many more maimed, to say nothing of the people killed, maimed and turned into refugees by Taylor's thugs in neighboring countries like Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast.

Much of the suffering in Liberia has gone largely unreported and unnoticed in the West. Not until rebel forces, just as brutal and vicious as Taylor's, began closing in on Monrovia, Liberia's capital, hedged round by thousands of refugees, has the world spotlight focused on this small, relatively insignificant west African country founded in the 19th century by Afro-Americans.

As innocent Liberian civilians were killed in the crossfire between fearful government soldiers and bloody rebels, many of them teenage boys turned into killers, their grieving, hysterical family members stacked up their bodies like cordwood in front of the American embassy in a plea for help. They cried for help especially from America. Not since Europe 1945 have people yearned for the appearance of American soldiers with such desperate intensity.

Even the World Council of Churches, which routinely condemns American military action almost anywhere, in this case called on President Bush to intervene to stop the bloodshed. Bush ordered a ship with troops to lie off the west African coast and sent in some military advisors, but refused to send in troops into a murky situation. There are no good guys to support among any of the warring factions that promise a

better future for Liberia.

The UN talked, the Europeans talked, leaders of western Africa talked. And the fighting and the killing went on. For a while it looked as if Liberia was going to turn into another Rwanda, but under international pressure, seeing his situation was hopeless, Taylor at last agreed to leave the country. And ECOWAS, an organization of west African states, sent in a contingent of US-trained Nigerian troops to enforce a cease-fire.

The interim government will be led by Gyude Bryant, chairman of the board of trustees of the Episcopal Church in Liberia. He was selected by the warring factions August 21 at the end of 78 days of peace talks in Accra, Ghana.

One of the first things Bryant spoke of was the need for forgiveness in the mutilated country and of the possibility of setting up a truth and reconciliation commission in Liberia along the lines of the one in post-apartheid South Africa.

But he said that when it comes to forgiveness, "it is difficult to talk about grace when you have no food and you are hungry and cannot feed your children and everything you have has been looted". That is why, he said, it was important to provide people with their basic needs.

He went on to say, however, that Liberia's situation is not hopeless. "We have the goodwill of the international community and we need to capitalize on that," he said. "Our faith is strong, rooted in fellowship, prayers and the church."

Bryant acknowledged that the government faced monumental problems. Among these are 450,000 displaced people living in Monrovia amid a crippling scarcity of food, water and medicine; an 85 percent unemployment rate; and thousands of still-armed combatants. As well, the World Health Organization warned of rising cholera cases that

could escalate into an epidemic.

The interim government will try to lead Liberia on the road to peace until elections in October 2005. Under the accord, the administration assumes control on October 14 from the former vice-president, who Taylor selected before going into exile to Nigeria.

You can help

Among the refugees created by Taylor were many Christians who belonged to the Mandingo tribe. These people were especially targeted. Many of them became refugees in Sierra Leone.

Among them are 32 young survivors from 8 families that have appealed to the Christian Reformed Church in Canada for help — via e-mail. Arie van Eek has agreed to represent them and asks for your help. To find out how you can help sponsor these orphans, call 905-336-2920 and ask for Arie, Theresa or Kristine.

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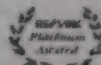
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October 18 — A DAY OF ENCOURAGEMENT and training for deacons, elders and all other interested church members at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster . Theme: "Delight in Him!" Choose from 50 workshops and 15 "Service Sites." All sessions are open to everyone. Cost: \$50. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or contact Diaconal Ministries at (905)336-2920 or visit us at www.diaconalministries.com .		The Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors Awards are given annually for research papers on the topics selected by the Calvinism Committee. The 2004 topic: John Calvin and Marriage Awards are payable to student tuition accounts at the colleges approved for offerings by the CRC Synod: Calvin, Dordt, King's, Redeemer, Reformed Bible, and Trinity Christian. 1st Prize: \$2,500 • 2nd Prize: \$1,250 For research paper guidelines and further information, request the Meeter Award Brochure * from The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, Hekman Library, 1855 Knollcrest Circle SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4402 USA, tel. 616-526-7081. Deadline for completed papers: January 15, 2004 * Brochures have also been sent to high schools associated with Christian Schools International.	
FIRST CRC OF GUELPH, ONTARIO 50th Anniversary Sat. Oct 11/03 10 a.m. - 12 noon Children's program 6 p.m. Social Hour 7 p.m. Banquet Variety Evening at Guelph Place Sun. Oct. 12: 10 a.m. Celebration Worship Service For tickets/info contact 519-822-7720 or e-mail: crc-guelph@sentex.net 		THE TRANSCONA CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH will be celebrating their 50TH ANNIVERSARY October 10-14, 2003. Celebration events include: Friday night Coffee House, Saturday evening Banquet and Special Worship services Sunday and Monday. For Banquet tickets or more details call Bev Steendam at 1-204-853-2150 or e-mail jsteenda@mts.net Visit our website www.mts.net/~vanboven	
 Saturday October 18, 2003, marks the 50th ANNIVERSARY of THE INGERSOLL CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH. We plan to celebrate this blessed occasion with a dinner program on the evening of that date, beginning at six p.m., in the Columbo Hall, Beachville. Former members and friends are hereby most cordially invited to join us for the evening. For further information, reservation and dinner tickets please call Mrs. Jane Heerema at 519-485-1113			

Classifieds

Job Opportunities/Miscellaneous

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position available. Milking 80 to 100 Holstein cows; freestalls; double 8 herringbone parlour - 4 years old; striving for top quality and higher than average production; working with owner and second full-time employee; 3 bedroom 1150 sq ft house available on farm. Located between St. Thomas and London. Current herdsman has worked here since 1988. Position available fall of 2003. Please respond stating expected remuneration and workload.

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The three Christian Reformed Churches of Sarnia, Ontario are seeking a full time Youth Director/Pastor to continue a

unique and exciting combined youth ministry. Solid programming & committed volunteer leadership is already in place. Candidate must have strong relational and administrative skills plus the desire and ability to lead and equip our youth, helping them to grow in faith and service to our Lord.

Please send resume and inquiries to:

Art Capelle,

**2261 Confederation, Sarnia, Ontario, N7T-7H3,
519-337-4660 or email: artc@rivernet.net**

DELTA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.

a preschool to Grade 7 school of approx. 225 students, is seeking applications for the position of **PRINCIPAL**. DCS is looking for a committed Christian leader with excellent interpersonal and team building skills. Applicants should have relevant experience in Christian education, preferably both primary and middle school.

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Mr. Darrell Renkema

Delta Christian School

4789 53 Street, Delta, BC V4K 2Y9

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THE THREE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES OF THUNDER BAY, Bethlehem, Hope and First,

are looking for an ordained or unordained **YOUTH PASTOR** to oversee and direct youth ministry within the three churches. The Youth Pastor will work closely with existing youth ministry teams to coordinate and develop effective youth ministry in each congregation, and have personal contact with the youth of each church. Applicants should have a degree in youth ministry from a Reformed institution or equivalent experience within a Christian Reformed context. The Youth Pastor will be hired on a three year contract. A review will be conducted after the first year. Salary range: \$40 000 - \$45 000 with benefits. A job description will be made available to interested applicants, as well as profiles of the three churches upon request. If interested in this exciting and challenging positions, contact Pastor Henry Vanderbeek at (807)939-1208 or Brian Schenk at byschenk@tbaytel.net or (807) 344-5516.

Effective Date of Vacancy: September, 2003

Application Deadline: September 30, 2003

LAURENTIAN HILLS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL invites applications for a full time

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Laurentian Hills Christian School, a diverse learning community of 350 students representing over 50 area churches is seeking to hire a Development Director for the 2003-2004 school year. The Development Director will be responsible for communicating the vision and mission of the school as well as raising long and short-term funds.

The Development Director should be a committed Christian was well as having an interest in and support of Christian education.

For a full job description check our website at www.lhcs.ws

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Faculty Positions

Dordt College is seeking applications in the following areas:

Criminal Justice Develop and teach in an interdisciplinary criminal justice program. Qualified applicants should have a background in criminal justice, criminology, sociology, or related field.

Education Special education. Ed.D or Ph.D preferred.

Environmental Studies Teach introductory and upper level Environmental Studies courses. Coordinate and direct the program, possibly teach course(s) in Biology, Earth Science, and/or Agriculture. Ph.D. required.

Health, Physical Education, Recreation (HPER) Teach a variety of HPER major and activity courses and coaching duties yet to be determined.

Psychology Teach introductory psychology and upper level courses in the area of counseling psychology.

Social Work Generalist; micro-practice background; methods courses and field practice.

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Theatre Arts Set design and teaching.

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Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution that strongly encourages the applications of women, minorities, and disabled persons.

Website: www.dordt.edu/offices/academic_affairs

CHAPLAIN TO SEAFARERS,
Montreal, Quebec.

With gratitude to him and Mrs. Karin Burghart for their years of service, the Board of Seaway Ministry announces the impending retirement of the Rev. Lloyd Burghart as of April 2004. We are therefore soliciting applications from qualified women or men for the position. We are looking for the following qualifications:

- The ability to be ordained as evangelist in the CRC is a minimum.
- Training and experience suitable to the position.
- A capacity to work in an ecumenical setting and with diverse staff and volunteers.
- A gift for languages and dealing with diverse cultures.
- A disposition for working with a Board and the congregations supporting the work

Remuneration and benefits will be commensurate with status and experience. Applications can be sent to:

**Pastor John Veenstra, Vice-Chair, BSM,
john.veenstra@sympatico.ca, tel. 905 436-3255.
918 Regent Drive, Oshawa, Ont. L1G1J1.**



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Classifieds

Miscellaneous

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Effective January 1, new rules provide an immediate charitable receipt of approx. 20% - 25% for all charitable gift annuities. Our Rates have not changed. If you've been thinking about getting a quotation, this is the time to do it! No obligation, call or write today!



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"Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations"

— Psalm 90:1

For sale: collection of 180 theological books in the Dutch language - many well known theologians of Reformed persuasion. A list of the books is available upon request. Call: **519-749-1294**
Rev. John Drost



Netherlands Bazaar, Thornhill Community Centre, Oct. 18

7755 Bayview Avenue,
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Crafts, etc. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
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THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

BRITISH COLUMBIA				ONTARIO			
R A D I O	Burns Lake - CFLD	9:15 am	1400	Atikokan - CFAK	9:30 am	1240	F
	Osoyoos - CJOR	8:00 am	1490	Chatham - CFCA	6:30 am	630	R
	Penticton - CKOR	8:00 am	800	Fort Frances - FM	7:30 am	93	O
	Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240	Guelph - CJOY	8:30 am	1460	M
	Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3	Hamilton - CHAM	7:30 am	820	C
	Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400	Kapuskasing - CKAP	7:00 am	580	O
	Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230	London - CKSL	7:00 am	1410	A
	Summerland - CHOR	8:00 am	1450	Oshawa - CKDO	8:00 am	1350	S
	Vernon - CJIB	9:30 pm	94	Owen Sound - CFOS	7:00 am	560	T
				Pembroke - CHVR	10:00 am	96.7	O
ALBERTA				NEW BRUNSWICK			
	Brooks - CIBQ	8:30 am	1340	Saint John - CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1	O
	Ft. McMurray - CJOK	8:30 am	1230	PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND			
	High River - CHRB	6:30 pm	1140	Charlottetown - CFCY	7:00 am	630	C
	Edmonton - CJCA	6:00 pm	930	NOVA SCOTIA			
	Westlock - CFOK	7:30 am	1370	Bridgewater - CKBW	7:30 am	1000	O
SASKATCHEWAN				Digby - CKDY	6:00 am	1420	A
	Estevan - CJSL	8:00 am	1280	Halifax - CFDR	8:30 am	780	S
	Weyburn - CFSL	8:00 am	1190	Liverpool - CKBW	7:30 am	94.5	T
MANITOBA				Kentville - CKEN	8:30 am	1490	
	Altona - CFAM	9:30 am	950	Middleton - CKAD	8:30 am	1350	
	Steinbach - CHSM	9:30 am	1250	New Glasgow - CKEC	7:30 am	1320	
	Winnipeg - CKJS	9:00 am	810	Shelburne - CKBW	7:30 am	93.1	
TELEVISION - Primary Focus				Sydney - CJC	7:00 am	1270	
				Weymouth - CKDY	8:30 am	103.1	
				Windsor - CFAB	8:30 am	1450	

Kids Corner Radio



Drayton Valley AB - CIBW 8:30 am Sunday 92.9 FM
Nordegg AB - CHBW 8:30 am Sunday 93.9 FM
Rocky Mtn. House AB - CHBW 8:30 am Sunday 94.5 FM
Prince Rupert BC - CJRN 10 am Saturday 100.7 FM

Our Address: 3475 Mainway PO Box 5070 Stn LCD1 Burlington ON L7R 3Y8
Web: www.backtogod.net/

Please Note: This concert will be re-scheduled.

See next issue for details

CONCERT in the Clinton Chr. Ref. Church

at 7:30 p.m. Participants are Chris Teeuwssen organist

The Blyth Festival Orchestra

the Men of Note and the Sarnia Male Choir-Sursum Corda.

Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion

- Sep 26** Wycliffe live dinner theatre production! A moving portrayal of how God is calling and preparing national Bible translators to fulfil the great commission. Freewill offering. Held at Calvary Church, 89 Scott St. **St. Catharines**. Call Ena Putnam 905-682-6787 for reservation.
- Oct 10-14** The Transcona CRC (Winnipeg, Manitoba) will be celebrating its **50th Anniversary** with praise, thanksgiving & fellowship. For info call: Bev Steendam at 204-853-2150 or jsteenda@mts.net
- Oct 11,12** First CRC, **Guelph**, Ont. 50th anniversary. Celebrations include childrens programs, Social, Banquet. See September issue for more details or e-mail: [crg-guelph@sentex.net](mailto:crc-guelph@sentex.net)
- Oct 14** Fryske Krite presents the comedy "Ferhuzing en Oare Ungemakken" Trenton Christian Sch. **Trenton**, Ont. Tickets \$12.00. Contact: Rose Devries (905) 623-0164. See ad
- Oct 15** Fryske Krite presents the comedy "Ferhuzing en Oare Ungemakken" Jarvis Community Centre, **Jarvis**, Ont. Tickets \$12.00. Contact: Rose Devries (905) 623-0164. See ad
- Oct 17** Fryske Krite presents the comedy "Ferhuzing en Oare Ungemakken" Durham Christian Homes, **Whitby**, Ont. Tickets \$12.00. Contact: Rose Devries (905) 623-0164. See ad
- Oct 18** Fryske Krite presents the comedy "Ferhuzing en Oare Ungemakken" Knox Chr. Sch. **Bowmanville**, Ont. Tickets \$12.00. Contact: Rose Devries (905) 623-0164. See ad
- Oct 18** Ingersoll CRC 50th anniversary. Dinner program at 6 p.m. Columbo Hall, Beachville. For info & dinner tickets, call Jane Heerema at 519-485-1113
- Oct 18** Netherlands Bazaar, Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Avenue, Thornhill. Market Place: Crafts, etc. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Auction 7 p.m. - 10 p.m. Dutch food delicacies 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Admission free. For information, call 905-477-1243
- Oct 18** A Day of Encouragement and training for deacons, elders and all other interested church members at Hamilton District Christian High School in **Ancaster**. Theme: "Delight in Him!". Choose from 50 workshops and 15 "Service Sites". All sessions are open to everyone. Cost: \$50. Contact your deacons for a registration form, or contact Diaconal Ministries at (905)336-2920 or visit us at www.diaconalministries.com.
- Oct 18** Brant Christian School, **Brantford**, Ont. 40th anniversary celebrations. For dinner tickets or more info, contact school at 752-0433 or email bcs@brant.net See ad this issue.
- Oct 18,19** Hope Christian Reformed Church of **Port Perry**, Ont. will be celebrating their 25th anniversary. For more information call 905-985-9307 or hopeportperry@sympatico.ca. See this issue for details.
- Oct 18, 29** Collingwood, Ont. CRC 50th anniversary. For more info, contact Clarence Feenstra at (705) 429-6091 or e-mail at klaasf@sympatico.ca See ad this issue for more details.
- Oct 27** Heritage Day at Redeemer University College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Speaker: Dr. Bert Polman. Featuring: program of student music. More info in Sep 22 issue.
- Nov 7** Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendert Kooij in ROY THOMSON HALL. \$30/\$22/\$16 Call 416-636-9779.
- Nov. 8** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. Centennial Road Standard Church, Centennial Road, North of **Brockville**. Freewill offering. (613)923-2487
- Nov 8,9** Alliston CRC 50th anniversary. Sat. open house, dinner, program, Sun. special services. For more info, see ad this issue or call 1-705-458-4433 or wcolyn@sympatico.ca
- Nov 22** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. First Christian Reformed Church, 33 Shirley Ave., **Barrie**. Freewill offering. (519)637-4357
- Nov 29** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. Providence United Reformed Church, 447 Second St., **Strathroy**. Freewill offering. (519)637-4357
- Dec 5, 6,7** Bethel CRC of **Lacombe, Alberta**, 50th anniversary - weekend of praise, thanksgiving and fellowship. All former and present members and friends are invited. For info, call: Eleanor Wildeboer at 403-782-2602 or e-mail wilelwildeboer@aol.com (See ad March 17 issue)
- Dec 14** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. Knox Presbyterian Church, 55 Hincks St., **St. Thomas**. Freewill offering for Christmas Care & Salvation Army. For info: (519) 637-4357
- Jan 17** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. Wallaceburg Christian Reformed Church, 150 Bruinsma Ave., Wallaceburg. Freewill offering for the Canadian Bible Society. (519)637-4357

THE LIVING WORD

Sermons for reading services

Contact:

R. VanderPloeg
Secr./Treas.

37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1

25th Anniversary

HOPE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

of Port Perry, Ont.

We invite all former members and friends to join us in a celebration of praise and thanksgiving.

October 18th will be a potluck celebration and

October 19th our celebration service.

For more information call 905-985-9307 or
hopeportperry@sympatico.ca.



REDEEMER
University College

invites you to join us for

HERITAGE DAY MONDAY, OCT. 27

(formerly Senior Citizen's Day)

Join us at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, ON.
Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. with activities planned from 10:00 to 3:00.

During the morning, Dr. Bert Polman will speak on "Three Curves in my Life".

Guests will have an opportunity to meet with their grandchildren and a program is also being planned for the afternoon.

Registration fee is \$15.00, including lunch.

Please call Doreen at
(905) 648-2131 ext. 4208 to register

We look forward to seeing you!



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Presents

"FERHUZING EN OARE UNGEMAKKEN"

Director: Harm Dijkstra

Trenton Christian School, Trenton	October 14, 2003
Jarvis Community Centre, Jarvis	October 15, 2003
Durham Christian Homes, Whitby	October 17, 2003
Knox Christian School, Bowmanville	October 18, 2003

Tickets \$12.00 per person

Contact: Rose Devries (905) 623-0164

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To God Be the Glory for the Things He Has Done.

The Christian Reformed Church of
Collingwood, ON

hopes to celebrate its **50th anniversary** on Saturday & Sunday
October 18 & 19, 2003.

There will be a pot-luck dinner at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday at the church followed by entertainment. Special Services will be held on Sunday at 10:00 am and 7:00 pm.

All former members and friends are invited to attend.

For more information please contact Clarence Feenstra at
(705) 429-6091 or e-mail at klaasf@sympatico.ca

B.C.S. 40TH ANNIVERSARY:

Saturday October 18, 2003

All alumni, parents of alumni, former teachers, and friends are invited to this celebration of God's faithfulness and goodness to our community over the past 4 decades.

We plan to start the day with a **Prayer of Thanksgiving** at the school at 8:00 a.m. There will be a volleyball tournament and other sports events planned for the morning. From 2:30 - 5:30 join your friends for a **Coffee Social** and browse around to see the displays and posters.

The **Homecoming Dinner** is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. followed by an **Evening Celebration Program** of fun and fellowship. For dinner tickets or more details contact the school office at 752-0433 or email bcs@brant.net



News

Church appeals for help against Lord's Resistance Army

Crespo Sebunya

KAMPALA (AANA) – The campaign by the Catholic Church in Uganda to have the international community intervene in war afflicting the northern part of the country is bearing fruits, signalling the Church's rising role in the country's political profile.

The United Kingdom (UK) has agreed to lead efforts to pave way for international mediation and a possible deployment of a peace-keeping force to stop the war, which has cost the country US \$1.3 billion, and killed at least 50,000 people, according to latest Government estimates.

Ugandan government has been struggling to battle the Lord's Re-

sistance Army (LRA), a notorious rebel force that has not laid out its political agenda, but has wreaked havoc and mayhem in the northern parts of the country.

Local attempts at mediation have yielded nothing, compelling the Church to appeal for international intervention, which has been greeted positively.

"There are calls for international mediation between the two sides, and for an international peacekeeping force," said Chris Mullin, British Minister in charge of Africa, who added: "We are liaising with EU (European Union) partners to look at options."

The move came after a concerted effort by the Church, mostly

the Catholic Church, to launch a campaign for international intervention in what the clergymen describe as a "forgotten war."

Bishop Benjamin Ojwang of Kitgum Diocese in northern Uganda, handed over a petition to the British Prime Minister's office last month, to bring attention to the war and to reminded the British Government of its responsibility.

"You brought Christianity 100 years ago, that saved us from sin, and we are back to you to find a solution. If something is not done, the war threatens to decimate entire communities," read part of the petition.

"Our mission is to accelerate efforts that will endeavor to save

communities from what seems like eternal suffering," Ojwang says.

However, the move to have the international community intervene is set to be a protracted affair, partly because some states require a green light from the Uganda government before taking action. Jimmy Kolker, US Ambassador to Uganda said recently that such intervention will depend on government requests for help.

Reluctant

Ugandan leadership, however, is reluctant to call in foreign help. Yoweri Museveni, Uganda's president, argues that foreign interference incapacitates a country's ability to seek homegrown solutions.

Museveni has unclear ambitions of his own, sending his soldiers into the Congo to aggravate the situation there.

Recently Uganda's Defence Minister Ruth Nankabirwa met with witch doctors to discuss the use of magical powers to dispel the LRA, underlining growing concern that the government is desperate. "Since Kony, the demonized leader of the LRA, uses spirits, it is appropriate that witch doctors cast their spell and defeat Kony," Nankabirwa is reported to have said.

Many soldiers within the ranks of Uganda's army believe that Kony has supernatural powers.



Hear their Hearts, See their World!

What is Gateways?

The Year 2003 marks the 50th Anniversary of Christian Aid Mission in Canada and the U.S.A.

To commemorate this milestone, Christian Aid will host a unique International Christian Missions Conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario called simply **Gateways**.

Gateways shall be a distinctive mis-

sions conference focusing on indigenous missionary movements around the world. Our theme *Hear their Hearts, See their World* will impart a vision of the **Gateways** that now exist to extend the Gospel. This conference will provide a wonderful opportunity for the North American church and the church in the developing world to meet one another and receive a new vision for mission from one another.

Who are These People?

The photos you see are of some of the main speakers who will be at **Gateways**. They are representative of the thousands of national missionary leaders that God has raised up in so many mission field nations. **Gateways** will help make the missions they represent (and many others) known and impart their vision for mission to the North American church. Christian Aid has invited over 30 of these outstanding men and women representing over two dozen nations to come to Canada to cause us to *Hear their Hearts, and See their World*.

What Next?

Registration for the **Gateways** Conference has now begun. Pastors, church delegates and individuals with a heart for Missions are invited to come and experience this landmark event.

For more information and to register, please contact: Mrs. Lynda Jamieson **Gateways Registration** Christian Aid Mission 201 Stanton Street, Fort Erie, ON L2A 3N8 or Phone us at: 1-800-871-0882 or Email us at: gateways@christianaid.ca or Visit us on the Web to register and find out more at: www.christianaid.ca



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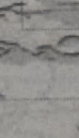
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